

"I think if only the judge in the Court of Appeal was fair, we could have won back our daughter."
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"Art is not just about genius, it's based on the real life of real people."
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When he met Li Xinyu, Wu Qi recognized in her the perfect model for his dream project.
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By Chu Meng

Xiushui Market, otherwise known as Silk Street, is one of Beijing's most popular tourist destinations. With a history of more than 20 years, it draws crowds of up to 20,000 people at weekends and is known for its array of stylish yet reasonably priced garments, designer shoes and bags of all kinds. The market attracts large numbers of foreign travelers, embassy staff, foreign residents, as well as local bargain hunters. For many visitors, it is an essential component of the Beijing itinerary, along with the Forbidden City and the Great Wall.

According to a report on June 19 in the *Beijing News*, the market is slated for demolition and the stalls are to be moved to a new building now under construction just five meters to the east. The reason given was that Xiushui Market was originally an unlicensed street market and there are serious concerns over the fire danger it poses.

Head of Jianguomenwai sub-district office Su Min told *Beijing Today* on Sunday, "There is a severe fire hazard in our market. And security problems have brought more and more attention from the security sections of embassies, especially the (nearby) American Embassy. Chaoyang Urban Planning Commission, Jianwai sub-district office, stall-keepers and developers of the new Xiushui Market Building will hold a hearing in the near future to discuss whether the old Xiushui Market should be demolished or not. But I cannot tell you the exact date of the hearing."

On June 22, a public auction of 10 "Golden Stalls" in a new five-storey building on the northwest corner of Dongdaqiao Lu and Jianguomenwai Dajie, right next to Silk Street, attracted record-breaking bids. One 5-square-meter stall went for nearly 4 million yuan (US \$480,000). The others also far exceeded the real estate developer's expectations. Four booths were sold for more than 2 million yuan, while the cheapest of the 10 went for 1.3 million yuan.

Fire hazard

The risk of fire in the market has long been an issue of concern. The market is 500 meters long, but only three meters wide. More than 10,000 shoppers visit every weekday, and on weekends the daily number swells to 20,000. More than half of them are foreigners. In early 2002, Beijing fire prevention authorities listed Silk Street as one of the city's 11 most dangerous fire hazards.

The market was closed for three days ahead of the May Day holiday this year to clear up some of the worst dangers. Guardrails were added to the southern exit to prevent a dangerous crush from occurring in the event of an emergency, and special evacuation routes

Silk Street Shuffle



The future of Beijing expats' favorite market is once again the subject of intense speculation. An auction of the first 10 stalls in a new building adjacent to Xiushui Market hit the headlines last week when bidders paid well over the anticipated price for all 10. The new five-story building is also called Xiushui Market.



Silk Street has long been one of Beijing's most popular shopping spots for tourists and expats.

Photos by Wang Yumeng

were built.

An officer from the US Embassy's security section, who declined to give her name, commented to *Beijing Today* Tuesday, "I have worked and lived in the embassy for more than four years. In the past, I was a regular visitor to Xiushui Market. I would say I went there several times a week. The real Chinese flavor of stuff there and the atmosphere of an exotic, open-air bazaar attracted me a lot. But now I seldom go there, because I think it is too crowded and the alley is too narrow. It is full of people all the time. Now, I have to think about the security problem. To me it is not safety enough."

Shi Xiuli, of Xiushui Market ad-

ministrative office, told *Beijing Today* Sunday, "We had sealed all the passages towards the embassy area and the residential buildings in the east. Now there is only one entrance to the market, which is at the same time the only exit, facing Chang'an Avenue. Of course we know it is far from adequate should an emergency occur, but we had to close down all openings linking to the embassies. And in order to reduce the fire risk, the market never allows vendors to use electricity for lights, neon signs or electric stoves and so on. So it closes as early as five o'clock in the evening every day, no matter how thriving the businesses are."

The new building, equipped with first-class facilities, will solve all of these problems, according to developer Yang Guobin, general manager of Beijing Xinyashenghong Real Estate Development Company. "Unlike the current market, the new building will operate into the night. And the new market will be equipped with adequate firefighting facilities. In terms of the shopping environment, we guarantee spacious and comfortable aisles between rows of stalls. With five floors above ground and one underground, the new market will have an area of 28,000 square meters and could include more than 1,500 stalls, nearly four times the current number. It also provides a two-level underground parking lot as well as

a 3,000-square-meter ground level parking area, greatly alleviating the security problem," he said.

Same name, different market

Because the new building will also be called Xiushui Market, many people assume that it will inevitably replace the outdoor market. Moreover, a report on June 18 in *China Daily* said "the 500-meter long, three-meter wide market is set to be demolished because of concerns over fire dangers."

However, when *Beijing Today* sought confirmation from the local government, the issue turned out to be far from resolved. Su Min, head of Jianguomenwai sub-district office said, "I don't know whether the commercial building will replace the current Xiushui Market. We are just in charge of administration work. Whether it is to be demolished or not is up to the Beijing Municipal Commission of Urban Planning." Su stressed that there was "virtually no connection between the old market and the new one. The auction was an independent activity by Beijing Xinya Shenghong Real Estate Development Company. And as has been reported in *China Daily*, relevant government bodies are to hold a public discussion to seek a solution to the problem."

However a source from the Beijing Municipal Commission of Urban Planning, who declined to give her name, said to *Beijing Today* when asked Sunday about the

public discussion, "A public discussion conference? Who told you about that? We haven't made any decisions about it. Whether the market is going to be demolished or not, the government will let you know in due time!" She refused to provide any further information.

Some vendors at Silk Street expressed reluctance about moving into the new building. "This is an open-air street market. Though it is old and crowded, foreigners and travelers like that. They like to bargain and hunt for Chinese style clothes and other small stuff in our market. There are already many large indoor markets such as Hongqiao and Yaxiu. They are quite different to ours," one stall vendor commented.

However Yang Guobin said "in 2002 when we first presented this project to the urban planning commission, we named it 'Dongdaqiao Commercial Mansion,' but the license from the commission revised the name to 'New Xiushui Market.' Therefore, you can see it is a decision of the government. More to the point, the demolition of the old, illegal market is absolutely nothing to do with our company."

Yang said, "Our company is a subsidiary of Beijing Xiushui Haoseng Fuzhuang Market Company, and the New Xiushui Market is a cooperation project between that company and the Community Economic Administration Center. The center is in charge of adminis-

tration work of the New Xiushui Market, while we will pay administration fees, stall rent fees and part of the taxes to the administration center."

Yang also showed *Beijing Today* an architectural model of the completed building, in which Silk Street has been turned into an access lane. "The area where the old Xiushui Market is located will become a street, to alleviate traffic pressure in the area and along east Chang'an Avenue," Yang said. "The only reason those stall operators are reluctant to move indoors is that they fear a decline in their profits. They will not earn the same huge amount of money in our building, because the rental fees are much higher, because of the high construction cost and better facilities we provide. Currently, most of the vendors in Silk Street are second-hand or even third or forth-hand leaseholders. The original owners in possession of the operating rights of those stalls earn tens of thousands every year just sitting at home."

However, the Community Economic Administration Center refused to provide any information or confirm any details to *Beijing Today*. From 410 stalls in the old market to more than 1,500 in the new one, if the administration center is indeed in charge of both markets, then the total administration fees it receives from the new complex would increase dramatically.

Meanwhile, a resident who has lived in the local community for more than 50 years told *Beijing Today* that the residential blocks between the World Trade Center and embassy area are all slated to be pulled down, making way for a new commercial area. She said the average price for a new apartment building in the embassy area was 19.5 thousand yuan per square meter, so even if there is no connection between the new Xiushui Market and the residential area marked for demolition, the sky-high prices paid for the stalls are certainly significant.

Local flavor

However, Silk Street Market has established a brand name and a reputation of its own over the past 20 years. "No visit to Beijing would be complete without a trip to the famous Silk Street Market. The prices are so cheap and bargaining is a new challenge for both of us, because we've never done that in our country," a Danish couple told *Beijing Today* as they wandered through the market, laden down with their purchases. They said it was their second visit of their two-week stay in Beijing.

Li Chengxun, a researcher and economist from the Chinese Academy of Social Science's Economic Research Institute once said in an interview with *China Daily*, "Xiushui Market is a brand name of one of Beijing's commercial streets. It has contributed to the cultivation of the cultural characteristics of the city. It is part of the spirit of Beijing, just as the Forbidden City, the Temple of Heaven, the Summer Palace, Qianmen, Dashilan and Wangfujing are. It is an essence of the maintenance and establishment of the Beijing's cultural identity."

He said the Silk Street Market is a symbol of the city's opening-up and development. However economic growth should not be to the detriment of Beijing's unique characteristics. Beijing needs the CBD and Zhongguancun Science and Technology Zone. It also needs to retain its own special flavor.

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Free Personal Classifieds

Beijing Today is launching a free personal classifieds service. For sale and wanted ads, situations wanted and vacant, language exchange and personals, and rentals will be

printed free of charge. Email your personal classifieds (in English and Chinese) to info@ynet.com. Personal classifieds should conform to relevant laws and regulations.

Administrative Licensing Law Takes Effect

By Yi Yi

The Administrative Licensing Law, described as a law “that will have the most far reaching effect on the daily life of Chinese people so far,” was officially implemented on Thursday. The law, aiming at preventing and eliminating corruption in the administrative approval process, will have a crucial impact on the reform process, anti-corruption and defending the rights and interests of the people.

There are as many as 3,000 projects requiring administrative approval from ministries and commissions under the State Council, and the number is even bigger at the local level. The implemen-

tation of the law will standardize the procedures of administrative permits, set clear requirements for administrative organs to improve work efficiency and provide better service, and lay down detailed rules on the legal responsibility and supervision concerning administrative permits.

The law, which was approved during the fourth session of the Tenth National People's Congress last August, has eight chapters and 83 articles. Stipulations include: government departments are not allowed to set up administrative approval projects at will, when setting up administrative approval projects, clear explanations must be

made and criteria specified in order to prevent administrative bodies from abusing their powers. For administrative permits that need to be handled by multiple government departments, such as those for establishing an enterprise or an investment project, or ordinary people registering for permanent residence or a marriage certificate, the law regulates that the various departments concerned shall gather under one roof to simplify the procedure.

Moreover, the law also makes clear that basic applications for administrative permits shall be determined within 20 days, and applicants can submit applications via post. No direct

contact between the applicant and the government official will decrease the chances of corruption.

“Since the essence of the planned economy is an economy of rules and regulations, thus the establishing of a socialist market economy in China is a process of gradually letting go of these rules and regulations. One of the key issues in the reforms of economic and administrative systems and the transformation of the government's function lies in promoting a ‘pro-market’ administrative approval system,” Yuan Shuhong, vice president of the National School of Administration told Xinhua Monday.

Tax Evasion by Multinationals under Scrutiny

By WeiLixin

Following revelations by the State Administration of Taxation (SAT) last month that China's tax revenue suffers an annual loss of 30 billion yuan due to tax avoidance by multinational corporations, local tax administrations have been urged to take effective measures to prevent tax avoidance.

Since the late 1990s, a large numbers of foreign companies have avoided paying tax by transferring their profits, using a variety of measures. As a result, the number of foreign companies reporting losses numbered 480,000, almost 55 percent of all the foreign companies operating in China up to May this year.

Su Xiaolu, an official from SAT, said in an interview with ctaxnews.com last month that so-called “book losses” by foreign companies are mainly due to affiliated trade. As an example, Su described how a company imports raw materials at a high price from an affiliated company but exports finished products at a low rate to another affiliated company, thus overdrawing the cost and reducing the reported profits in order to avoid tax.

To resolve the problem, some specialists have suggested that SAT should institute a special regulation to accelerate the adoption of advanced agreements with tax authorities on acceptance transfer pricing methodology on a bilateral or multilateral basis (APA).

The APA can be used to resolve complex transfer pricing issues where it is difficult to determine a suitable method for establishing an arm's length price or the transaction is so complex that the principles set out in the OECD model are not relevant to establish arm's length prices.

“The possibility of requesting an APA is being introduced into the national legislation of a growing number of countries, but China has not legislated a law governing APA till now. I believe, however, that the supervision administration will enact regulations towards an APA in the future,” a professor who declined to reveal his name from the Business School of Renmin University told *Beijing Today* Wednesday.

“Why multinationals conduct tax evasion is a complicated issue,” he said, “it is not fair to simply conclude that the main reason is to reduce taxation, many factors must be taken into account.”

Red Tape Cut for Foreign Trade Operators

By Zhang Bo

The newly-revised Foreign Trade Law took effect as of yesterday. In line with the law, the Ministry of Commerce has replaced the previous examination and approval system for foreign trade operators with a new registration and recording system. Individuals will now be permitted to engage in foreign trade after completing certain legal procedures.

The examination and approval system on foreign trade operators was introduced against the background of China's transition from a highly-centralized planned economy to a market economy. Under such a system, enterprises without foreign trade rights received unequal treatment with enterprises that enjoyed such rights.

According to commitments made on entry to the WTO, China will remove all controls on the right to engage in foreign trade from 2004. The new registration system will only provide information for government supervision and will not hamper the ability to do business of foreign trade operators.

Under the new measures, after filing a simple registration form and presenting the industrial and commercial operation license to the relevant authorities, an enterprise can complete the registration procedure within five working days.



The 36th bridge over the Yangtze River was declared open yesterday. With a total length of 2,100 meters and a height of 212 meters, the concrete suspension bridge at Badong County, Hubei Province, is the longest of its kind in Asia and the second longest in the world.

Photo by Photocom

Finance Supervision Clarified

By Wei Lixin

A memorandum on the division of responsibilities and cooperation in financial supervision and regulation was released on Monday by the China Banking Regulatory Commission (CBRC).

The memorandum aims at clarifying the respective responsibilities of the CBRC, the China Securities Regulatory Commission (CSRC) and the China Insurance Regulatory Commission (CIRC). It covers financial supervision and regulation, coordination of the actions of the three commissions to avoid omissions and overlap of supervision and regulation, enhancing efficiency and encouraging financial innovation so as to ensure that all financial institutions and their financial businesses are under continuous and effective supervision, thereby safeguarding the sound development of the financial industry.

According to the memorandum, the CBRC is responsible for supervising and regulating banks, asset management companies, trust investment companies and other deposit-taking financial institutions, the CSRC is responsible for supervising and regulating the securities and futures markets and the CIRC is responsible for supervising and regulating the insurance market.

The memorandum sets out a cooperation mechanism, under which, when one commission requests needed information of an institution under the supervision of another commission, the latter should assist the former to obtain the required information.

Furthermore, a joint meeting mechanism will be established among the three commissions, with regular meetings held on a quarterly basis.

“For the supervisors, it is a practical choice based on the development of the finance industry in China at present,” Zhao Xijun, a professor from the Finance Research Institution of Renmin University was quoted as saying in Tuesday's *Beijing Morning Post*.

When the CBRC was founded last year, analysts pointed out that separate supervision is simply a transition towards integrated supervision. The memorandum is actually a move towards integrated supervision and regulation.

Airlines to be Penalized for Delays

By Yi Yi

In a move aimed at improving airline punctuality, the Civil Aviation Administration of China (CAAC) has introduced tough new measures. As of Thursday, operational rights on specific routes will be directly connected to airlines' punctuality rate. An official from the Transportation Department of CAAC told Xinhua Tuesday that all airline companies are required to set up a flight punctuality report system.

Monthly punctuality reports must be submitted to the local civil aviation administrative bureau and to CAAC. Flights delayed more than two hours must be reported immediately to the director on duty of the day; flights delayed more than four hours must be reported to the local civil aviation administrative bureau and safety supervising office.

Airlines with a punctuality rate and planned flight implementation rate lower than the average rate of the industry will be restricted from increasing the number of

flights in the following season; those that change the flight timetable or departure time on the ticket from the published timetable will forfeit the operational permit of the route and the flight; while those that cause significant delays for large numbers of passengers will have their right to operate the route suspended.

Prior to the issue of these measures, CAAC released last Friday a guideline on flight delay compensation, stating that if a long delay is the fault of the airline company, passengers will be compensated accordingly.

CAAC remarked that the airline companies should work out their own detailed compensation criteria, and all airline companies shall issue a service commitment within the year, in which delay compensation will be the key item. So far, Shanghai Airlines, Hainan Airlines, Sichuan Airlines, Southern Airlines, Eastern Airlines and Air China, which have established service commitments, do not have detailed compensation criteria.

New Subways Offer 15 billion Investment

By Sun Yongjian

The construction of urban railways in Beijing will provide investment opportunities of 15 billion yuan (US \$1.8 billion) for 91 enterprises from 14 countries and regions, vice mayor of Beijing Zhang Mao announced at a conference Tuesday.

An open bidding will be held in the near future, said Zhang, under which the total investment will be shared by the Beijing government and social investors at a proportion of seven to three,

The four urban railway projects, comprising of the Nos. 4, 5, 9 lines and phase one of the No. 10 line, are 103 kilometers long in total. Total investment will be around 49.9 billion yuan, of which 70 percent will come from the Beijing government and the remaining 30 percent, totaling around 15 billion yuan, from private investors in the form of franchise, mainly used for the purchase of rolling stock and the installment

of electro-mechanical equipment, Zhang said.

Ding Xiangyang, president of Beijing Development and Reform Commission (BDRC), said at the conference that the open bidding targets should be opened to pluralized investors.

Ding also said that a franchise company is to be launched to take charge of operation of the projects, in which the government will offer the right of use of some parts of the assets and the private investors will offer cash.

Although the government will hold a 51 percent equity in this company, the private investors will hold both the right of setting policy in routine affairs and the right of profit distribution.

Chai Xiaozhong, vice president of BDRC, also revealed at the conference that Beijing's subway ticketing system would be reformed, with scaled ticket prices replacing the current set fee system by 2006.

World Heritage Conference Opens in Suzhou

By Yi Yi

The 28th Session of the World Heritage Committee of UNESCO opens Monday in Suzhou, east China's “city of gardens,” in Jiangsu Province.

More than 500 representatives from about 100 countries and regions attended the opening ceremony presided over by Zhang Xinsheng, vice-minister of education and chairman of this session.

During the 10-day meeting, the conference will examine new nominations to the World Heritage List and discuss a new global strategy for the protection of world heritage.

President Hu Jintao said in a message at the opening ceremony that China will further expand international cooperation to ensure the full protection and appropriate utilization of cultural and natural heritages.

Agreement Reached on Bohai Economic Ring

By Yi Yi

The National Development and Reform Commission, Ministry of Commerce, leaders from Beijing, Tianjin, Hebei, Shanxi, Inner Mongolia, Shandong and Liaoning along with the secretary-general of Bo'ao Asian Forum, Long Yongtu, reached a cooperation agreement at a meeting in Langfang, Hebei Province last Saturday. The agreement represents an essential step for the Bohai Economic Ring area.

The June 26 summit established a three-layer structure for the Bohai Economic Ring area cooperation mechanism to promote further cooperation and development. On the first layer of the organization chart are the governors of the four concerned provinces, mayors of the two cities directly under the central government and the chairman of the Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region, who will serve in rotation as the chairman of the cooperative mechanism.

On the second and third layer of the chart is the establishment of the vice secretary-general coordination system and government department coordination system. The main arrangements for this year have been worked out and the first Bohai Economic Ring Area Business Fair will kick off in Langfang in the spring of 2005.

Waterway Transportation Franchises Awarded through Public Bidding

By Hua Wen

The franchise of joint shipping companies in transporting industrial chemical products between domestic ports through public bidding is a forerunner of such kinds of franchises in China, a Xinhua report stated last Friday.

Of the 24 domestic and international chemical shipping companies incorporated in 10 units which participated in the public bidding, five domestic shipping companies – Hainan Sinochem Shipping, Shanghai Dongzhan Oil Transportation, Dalian Ocean Shipping, China North Industries Group and Nanjing Yangyang Industrial and Chemical Shipping and Trading won tenders with their international partners from South Korea, Hong Kong, the Netherlands and Japan.

A news release on the ministry's official website says the bidding is intended to reshuffle the technical structure of the companies in transporting industrial chemical products, for such techniques are less developed in China, especially those between domestic ports. “But such transportation has great market potential. The proper degree of opening to the outside plays a role of a model and will promote the rapid development of domestic industrial chemical product transportation,” the release said.

Management of Income Tax on Foreigners Tightened

By Shelley Xie

The State Administration of Taxation issued a notice Wednesday stating that Chinese employees working for international organizations, embassies and consulates in China, as well as Chinese and foreign employee of foreign press organizations, must pay personal income tax.

According to international practice, foreign employee without diplomatic status but with a permanent residence certificate working for international organizations or foreign embassies and consulates in China should also pay income tax. Since China has no related tax law covering “permanent residence,” income tax is not levied temporarily on those people, the notice said.

Cinda Signs Deal on Bad Loans

Cinda Asset Management Co. will buy 278.7 billion yuan (\$33.6 billion) in non-performing loans from the Bank of China (BOC) and the China Construction Bank (CCB), in a fresh move by the country's financial sector to improve the health of state-run banks, the *Economic Daily* reported yesterday.

BOC, CCB and the central People's Bank of China, which is said to have co-ordinated the transactions, all declined to comment, according to Thursday's *China Daily*.

The deal, signed on Tuesday,

will help the two banks clean their balance sheets. Both are racing for stock market listing. Listing schemes are seen as crucial in enhancing financial strength and efficiency of the state banks, which are busy preparing for competition from foreign rivals. The country is scheduled to fully open its banking sector by the end of 2006 according to the country's commitments to join the World Trade Organization.

Of the total loans in the transaction inked on Tuesday, loans worth 149.8 billion yuan (\$18 billion) are

from the BOC and the remaining are from CCB, according to the newspaper.

Cinda would buy the loans at 30 percent of the loans' book value, a Cinda spokesperson said.

Cinda won the deal in a bidding also participated in by three other asset management companies, Huarong, Orient and Great Wall. All four were created in 1999 to handle the bad loans of the four big state banks. The asset management companies acquired 1.4 trillion yuan (\$168 billion) of bad loans in 1999

from the Big Four to improve their asset quality.

Last year, BOC, the country's foreign exchange bank, and CCB, China's main property lender, were picked by the government as fore-runners in shareholding reform. As a result, the two banks received a \$45 billion government bail-out at the end of 2003.

In May, CCB sold \$483 million worth of bad debt to foreign investors such as Morgan Stanley and Deutsche Bank in the first deal of its type. (Xinhuanet)

Netease Promotes Multimedia Instant Messaging

By Ayi

Netease launched the second generation of its free multimedia instant messaging (IM) service, popo.163.com, Tuesday in Beijing.

Ding Lei, chief technology officer of Netease, predicted the new IM service to replace free email services and said multimedia IM, which allows users to send and receive large attachments as well as audio and video transmissions, would be widely popular in two to three years.

Since its launch in 2002, popo.163.com has become the No. 3 Chinese IM service with a six percent share of the domestic market. QQ, a competing service from Tencent, ranks first with a 71 percent market share and Microsoft's MSN controls a second-place 17 percent share, according to an iResearch survey conducted earlier this year.



Ding Lei, chief technology officer of Netease.

Domestic TV Giant Teams Up with Microsoft

By Sun Yongjian

American software power Microsoft on June 27 signed a strategic cooperation agreement to work with Chinese firm Changhong Electric Co. in the area of multimedia, just three days before Microsoft Chairman Bill Gates arrived in China for a two-day business trip.

Anny Liu, head of public relations for Microsoft China, told *Beijing Today* on Tuesday that the plan called for "comprehensive cooperation in the multimedia field," but would not elaborate.

Sichuan Province-based Changhong is a giant in the domestic electronics industry and has been working to establish a leading place in China's IT technology and multimedia markets, an unnamed company executive told the Xinhua News Agency last Sunday.

International Financial Manager Credential Comes to China

By Hua Wen

Domestic financial and economic managers have a new way to show they know their stuff following the Ministry of Labor and Social Security's approval of the debut of International Financial Manager (IFM) certification in this country, Xinhua reported last Sunday.

IFM is a certification system targeting financial and economic management professionals and run worldwide by the American International Management Accountants Association. There are two levels of qualification under the system – International Financial Manager and Advanced International Financial Manager.

While assessments in many countries are done in English, domestic evaluations will be conducted in Chinese.

In its Sunday statement, the ministry said IFM qualification was recognized and authorized by the Chinese government.

New Air Route Links Capital to Yunnan

By Yu Shanshan

For consumers in Beijing and Shanghai, getting to scenic spots in distant Yunnan Province got much easier on Thursday with the opening of two new domestic air routes connecting those cities to Kunming, Yunnan's capital, and Dali, a major tourism site in the southwestern province.

Wen Nengsong, vice president of China Eastern Yunnan Airlines, announced the opening of the lines at a news conference in Beijing the same day.

Local departures along the new route will take off from daily from Beijing at 6:30 pm, arrive at Kunming at 9:35 pm and then continue to Dali, reaching that final destination at 11:35 pm.

Flights in the other direction leave Dali at 7 am, reach Kunming 7:30 am and after a brief lay-over continue on to Beijing, touching down at Capital International Airport at 10:55 am.

Eurail Passes Sold in Town

By Sun Yongjian

Chinese tourists have been able to buy convenient rail passes for traveling through 27 European countries in Beijing since June 1, Gu Jian, Chinese representative at the Beijing office of European Railway Group, announced at a press conference on Thursday.

That office is selling train tickets valid across Europe, as well as two-month and 15-day through-passes, or Eurail passes, which can be used to visit 17 Western European countries.

Travelers who buy such through-tickets can enjoy visa exemption in those nations, with the exception of non-Schengen states Switzerland and the UK.

The local service is being exclusively offered by ERG's Beijing Office and ticket prices are the same as they are in Europe, according to Gu.



People celebrated the first anniversary of the opening of the "International Bazaar" in Urumqi, Xinjiang on Tuesday. With a total floor area of around 40,000 square meters, the bazaar has become a major travel and logistics center in Central Asia. Xinhua Photo

Shenzhen Embezzlers Face Big Pay Back

By Hua Wen

Shareholders of companies on the Shenzhen stock exchange proven to have embezzled corporate capital are going to face payback, including returning all the illegally purloined funds to the cheated enterprises, Monday's *Security Daily* reported.

In a recently-released new regulation, the Shenzhen Securities Regulatory Bureau stipulated that major shareholders and related parties in 51 listed companies shown to have embezzled over 5 million yuan each were the first group on its hit list.

Most of the targeted embez-

zlers have promised to return the stolen funds by 2005 and some others set a repayment deadline of 2010, but a few have insisted they would not be able to give back their embezzled cash.

Shenzhen Securities Regulatory Bureau Director Zhang Yundong said infringing shareholders that failed to return embezzled funds would have any later applications for financing, refinancing, reconstructing or taking over other listed companies duly rejected.

Zhang encouraged listed companies that have suffered embezzlement to go all out to get their money back. "Legal shareholders

and investors can sue embezzlers in court, or seek other legal protection of their rights," he was quoted as saying by *Security Daily*.

Several Shenzhen newspapers have reported that embezzlement has long been a severe issue in companies listed in Shenzhen, though recent tallies show the fruits of graft have dropped.

A total of around 8.5 billion yuan was embezzled from said companies in 2003, down from 9.2 billion yuan in 2001. Of the 2003 figure, more than 5.5 billion yuan was spent for private purchases completely unconnected to the companies' business operations.

PCs, not their entire product lines.

"HP is the first technology company to publicly announce the existence of this problem – which we discovered by conducting our own ongoing and routine testing of our notebook products," Ronald Kasik, director of total customer experience, customer engineering and marketing for HP's Personal Systems Group, was quoted as saying in the company news release.

Kong-listed China Life. The major domestic insurer was found to have concealed accounting problems before it held its IPO in Hong Kong. Similar charges have been leveled at China Minsheng Bank and Construction Bank of China, other customers of Citibank Hong Kong's investment bank.

The suspensions would not affect Citibank's business in China, Wang said.

HP Launches Global Notebook Recall

By Sun Yongjian

Not long after two domestic car makers starting sweeping recalls of potentially defective products, China Hewlett-Packard (China HP) announced Monday it was taking back products as part of a global recall of up to 900,000 HP laptop computers worldwide.

Less than five percent of the products targeted in the recall were in the hands of Chinese customers, China

HP announced. The company promised to provide free replacements for any recalled computers, which may be affected by a design flaw in their memory modules identified during routine testing across the industry.

Those flawed modules can result in memory corruption, intermittent lock-ups and unexpected blue screens, according to the company. The memory modules were only used in certain Compaq and HP notebook

China Investment Banking, according to Wang. The duties of both have been temporarily assumed by Francis Liang, Citibank Group chairman for investment banking in the Asia region.

Wang would not say whether the false information in question had to do with accounting, but she did say it had nothing to do with Citibank's investment banking customers, including Hong

Citibank Hong Kong Penalizes Execs

By Sun Yongjian

Two high-ranking executives of Citibank Group in Hong Kong were suspended from duty on June 24 for providing false information in reports to the company and their superiors, Wang Li, a public relations officer from Citibank's Shanghai branch confirmed on Monday.

The two executives under scrutiny are Margaret Ren, a senior banker, and Earl Yan, director of

Fed Raises Interest Rates

Washington, June 30 (AP) - The Federal Reserve on Wednesday raised interest rates for the first time in four years, reversing course as the economy strengthened. Policy-makers signaled only slow increases ahead in the rock-bottom rates Americans have enjoyed.

Wall Street rallied modestly on the Fed's continued promise of a "measured" pace for future rate increases, with the Dow Jones industrial average climbing 22.05 points to 10,435.48. Bond prices also rose on the news, pushing the yield on 10-year Treasury notes down to 4.59 percent, compared with 4.69 percent the previous day.

In what was the most telegraphed rate increase in Fed history, Federal Reserve Chairman Alan Greenspan and his colleagues announced they were boosting the target for the federal funds rate by one-quarter of a percentage point, to 1.25 per-

cent. This rate, which represents the interest that banks charge each other on overnight loans, is the Fed's primary tool for influencing economic activity.

The Fed's decision triggered a one-quarter percentage point increase in commercial banks' prime lending rate, which also had not risen in four years.

This benchmark borrowing rate for millions of consumer and business loans rose from 4 percent, the lowest since 1959, to 4.25 percent.

The Fed's quarter-point increase was the first change since the funds rate was cut to a 46-year low of 1 percent in June 2003. That had marked the 13th Fed rate cut in a series that began back in January 2001 as the central bank battled to jump-start an economy staggered by a series of blows, from a plunging stock market and the 2001 recession to terrorist attacks and two wars.

With Wednesday's rate increase, borrowers have seen the lows for mortgage rates and other loans. But economists said that rates for homes and autos should continue to be attractive, given the Fed's comments that it did not expect inflation to pose a problem soon.

The Fed reaffirmed a pledge, first made at its May meeting, that future rate increases would come "at a pace that is likely to be measured."

Many economists are looking for the Fed to keep increasing the funds rate until it hits around 4 percent. At that level, analysts said, the Fed would view the rate as neither stimulating extra growth nor acting as a drag on growth.

The rate increases are expected to have little impact in slowing the economy before the November election. That would be good news for President Bush and other incumbents.



Traders wait for a report from the US Federal Reserve on the floor of the New York Stock Exchange, moments before the Fed raised interest rates for the first time in four years June 30, 2004 in New York City. The Federal Reserve announced a widely expected 0.25 percentage point increase in interest rates.

AFP Photo

We Are Coming



Photo by Photocome

After a seven-year cruise through the Solar System, the joint NASA/ESA/ASI Cassini-Huygens spacecraft July 1 (US Eastern Standard Time) successfully entered orbit around Saturn. The Cassini orbiter is now ready to begin its four-year survey of the planet and its moons, while the Huygens probe will be prepared for the next major mission milestone: its release toward the largest moon, Titan, in December.

G10 Bankers Back New Rules

Basel, June 26 (Reuters) - Central bank governors and regulatory heads from the G10 industrial nations approved on Saturday a sweeping rewrite of global bank safety rules, saying it would promote world economic growth.

The Basel II Capital Accord governing how much cash banks set aside as a buffer against risks now faces battles at the national level. Regulators must persuade politicians that the model code will make the financial system more robust without imposing burdensome costs on the banking industry.

"It will enhance banks' safety and soundness, strengthen the stability of the financial system as a whole, and improve the financial sector's ability to serve as a source for sustainable growth for the broader economy," Jean-Claude Trichet, Chairman of the G10 central bank group, said in a statement.

After legislative approval, attention will turn to implementing the accord, with each country jealously watching the other to ensure that one nation's bank regulator doesn't tip the playing field with lax interpretations.

The accord - which regulators take pains to call a "framework" - introduces the concept that regulations should evolve in line with advances in risk control practices, instead of by transforming theory into decrees.

That means the accord's publication is just a starting point and that revisions to key portions of the accord are underway already, regulators say.

Some committee members fear the international banking system will face a test of fire before big banks have had a chance to implement the new rules, which will be phased in between the end of 2006 and end of 2007.

Basel II sets out detailed rules for how banks measure and protect themselves against external shocks. Because banks sit at a crossroads of economic activity, a failure in one corner of the globe can cause real economic problems in another.

Analyst's Take:

In an attempt to restrict the over-extension of banks with inadequate capital, G10 negotiated the

Basel Accord in 1988. The impact of the accord has extended to over 100 countries since then.

Market discipline, supervision of the central bank and minimum capital requirement are three main contents of Basel II. Under the current situation, the minimum capital adequacy ratio of 8 percent set by the original Basel Accord will not be raised as only some big banks in developed countries have reached this standard. Therefore, facing the uncertain world economy, a steady development of the world banking sector could benefit the recovery of the world economy.

However, the new standards of Basel II were largely set according to the conditions of the robust market economy of the developed countries, and some indexes of requirement were also introduced on the basis of a strengthened economy. As a result, disparities and inconsistencies in the new accord regarding most of the developing countries are conspicuous.

- Tan Yaling, Contributing Writer, International Herald Leader, Beijing

Trade Official Sees Chinese Wave

Dearborn, Mich., June 23 (Reuters) - Cars built in China's low-cost labor market could start pouring into the United States in large volumes by the end of this decade, a senior US trade official said on Wednesday.

Al Warner, director of the Office of Automotive Affairs at the US Department of Commerce, made the prediction in a Reuters interview after speaking about China to an auto industry conference in Detroit.

Warner told Reuters "big numbers" of Chinese-built cars and trucks were likely to be selling on the US market in "four or five years."

US imports of Chinese auto parts have already surged more than 100 percent over the last three years to \$2.8 billion in 2003, according to Warner.

In his speech he added that continued growth was inevitable, given "the cost pressures of the hyper-competitive US market."

None of that is good news for the United Auto Workers, and UAW President Ron Gettelfinger made that clear at the Dearborn, Michigan, conference not long after Warner spoke.

The Detroit-based UAW, long considered one of the world's most powerful trade unions, has suffered steep declines in its membership in recent years as automakers shift manufacturing and other jobs overseas.

"No worker anywhere can compete with the painfully low wages and terrible working conditions endured by so many workers in China. And, as we all know, China is becoming a growing world power in the auto industry," Gettelfinger said.

"Workers around the world are suffering from a global race to the bottom," Gettelfinger added, saying auto workers all over the world faced a serious threat from China and its "reservoir of repressed, low-cost labor."

Analyst's Take:

The possibility of built-in-China cars pouring into the US in large volumes by the end of this decade is quite slim.

The US car market is saturated and hyper-competitive. Though it's the biggest market in the world, there is little space left in it for Chinese cars.

The Detroit-based "Big Three" - GM, Ford and Chrysler - share more than 60% of the total US auto-market, while cars built in Asia and Europe hold 30%, among which Japanese brands such as Honda and Toyota are the main rivals to the Big Three. It will be hard for Chinese cars to compete with these automobile giants.

China exported more than 93,700 cars from January to April this year, and in April alone about 20,000 of them were destined for the US. Still, compared to total annual sales in the US auto market of 17 million, that figure is negligible.

Chinese auto manufacturers, especially local brands, do not have the capacity to export in large volumes. They are confronted with technical barriers, and are not familiar with the safety and environmental regulations abroad. These are the main barricades for them.

- Jia Xinguang, chief analyst from China National Automotive Industry Consulting & Developing Corporation (CAC-China Auto Consulting)

Foreign Investors Prefer China

Paris, June 29 (Reuters) - China overtook the United States as the biggest recipient of foreign direct investment (FDI) last year as companies shunned the world's largest economy in favor of its most populous, the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) said Monday.

China attracted \$53 billion in FDI last year, compared with \$40 billion for the United States. Luxembourg actually attracted more notional FDI than China at \$73 billion, but the OECD said most of this was money passing through holding companies.

The United States, which attracted \$72 billion in FDI in 2002, suffered the biggest fall in FDI among the OECD's 30 industrialized member countries.

In Europe, FDI into Germany fell to \$13 billion from \$36 billion in 2002. France remained a favorite for foreign investors, drawing in \$47 billion in FDI last year, compared with \$49 billion in 2002.

Boeing Vows Action on Airbus Aid

Paris, June 28 (Reuters) - Harry Stonecipher, chairman of US aerospace giant Boeing, vowed in an interview with the Financial Times on Monday to take unspecified action on European government support for rival Airbus, but said it was in no one's interest to start a trade war.

European governments are financing nearly a third of the cost of the Toulouse, France-based plane maker's new A380 superjumbo jet.

Airbus says the financing is in the form of repayable, market-rate loans which conform with the terms of a 1992 trade agreement between the United States and Europe.

Airbus has also argued that Boeing receives indirect subsidies for its commercial aerospace business through Pentagon research and development funds intended for its military programmes.

Currently, neither Airbus nor the European governments that provide it with loans reveal the terms of those loans.

Euro Disney Plan Passed

Paris, June 29 (AFP) - Euro Disney, the theme park near Paris, passed a key hurdle in its financial restructuring after creditors approved an extension of its debt covenant waivers to July 31, the company said.

The plan, which includes a 250 million euro (US\$303 million) share capital increase, new credit lines and deferred debt repayments, must now be approved by all creditors by July 31, 2004.

French financial daily Les Echos reported earlier Tuesday that the plan for restructuring of Euro Disney's 2.4 billion euro debt had won support from enough creditors to move to the next phase.

Payments on Euro Disney's debt have been suspended since November and the company has said it will not be able to meet its repayment schedule unless the restructuring is approved.

News Corp Bound for the US

Canberra, June 29 (Reuters) - The Australian government will raise no objections to News Corp Ltd's proposal to relocate its place of incorporation to the United States, Treasurer Peter Costello said Tuesday.

"Under the Foreign Acquisitions and Takeovers Act 1975, I have decided to raise no objections under the government's foreign investment policy," Costello said in a statement.

The proposal is subject to approval by the company's shareholders and is expected to be formally considered at a meeting in October.

The government's Foreign Investment Review Board became involved because the proposed relocation means the new US-based company is buying the assets of Australia-based News Corp.

The deal would also involve the controlling interest in Queensland Press, moving from one foreign owner to another. In this case, from US citizen Rupert Murdoch to the US-based News Corporation.

Under Australia's foreign investment laws, all offshore investment in Australian media companies requires government approval.

US Blocks Israelis

Tel Aviv, June 22, (Haaretz Service & AP) - The US is trying to prevent Israeli companies from taking part in Chinese tenders for providing security at the 2008 Beijing Olympics, Israel Radio reported Tuesday morning.

According to the report, Israeli firms will be able to participate only as subcontractors of international companies.

Israeli businessmen accompanying Minister of Industry and Trade Ehud Olmert on his visit to China, said that cooperation with international bodies may enable Israeli companies to bypass American security-related limitations on Israeli sales to China.

However, Olmert said during his visit on Tuesday that Israel sees China as its top trade priority over the next 10 years, and hopes to offer its security and high-tech skills as Beijing gears up for the 2008 Olympics.

Olmert cited telecommunications and "of course, the homeland security area which will of course naturally become very important, very sensitive for these games," as key targets for Israeli business.

A Gift of Hope

Stem cells from Chinese donor flown to US for emergency transplant

By Zhou Ying

Stem cells donated by a young Chinese woman made it across the Pacific Ocean last Friday and after being transplanted could save the life of a Chinese man in the US suffering from leukemia.

A vial containing 150 milliliters of peripheral blood stem cells (PB-SCs) taken from the second-year university student over two days by doctors at the Beijing Daopei Hospital were flown Tuesday to a US hospital, where they will be transplanted into the waiting patient next week.

The Red Cross Society of China-organized effort marked the first time donated stem cells from China have crossed national borders.

"It is my honor to be the first Chinese donor of stem cells to the US," Wu Yu, a sophomore at Chongqing University of Medical Sciences, told *Beijing Today* after the donation was completed on Tuesday.

Wu signed up to be a marrow donor with China's national Marrow Donor Program in September, at which point a small sample of her stem cells were taken for registration and filing.

The recipient is a Chinese man living in Houston, Texas who suffers from life-threatening leukemia, said Liu Jinghu, deputy director of the Hematopoietic Stem Cell Donor Program Administration Center, which operates under the national Marrow Donor Program.

The patient's American doctors sought help from China's Marrow Donor Program in March after failing to find proper stem cell matches in the US or Taiwan. Checks with the domestic program showed that Wu Yu was a near perfect match.

In 1995, Daopei Hospital became the first facility in China to master the process of collecting stems cells through pe-

ripheral blood. In that process, blood is drawn from the right arm and then pumped back into the left after the stem cells have been separated and extracted by machine.

Hospital Director Lu Daopei explained that before 1995, doctors could only collect stem cells from blood extracted from bone marrow. "We advocated this new method because it is much more comfortable, convenient and safe, and most of all, basically painless," Lu said.

"The recipient is in stable condition and wrote a letter to Miss Wu to express his appreciation. He thanks her for her kindness, generosity and compassion," said John D. Mcmannis, director of the cell processing laboratory department for blood and marrow transplantation at the MD Anderson Cancer Center in Texas, where the recipient is undergoing treatment. He added that his patient was especially pleased to know that the cells' donor was also Chinese.

Mcmanis suggested the Chinese government do more to publicize the need for more marrow donations as a way to save many lives. He said that if everything went smoothly, the actual transplant would be done next Friday. Mcmanis said the patient could even come to China to meet his potential savior after one year.

According to Liu Jinghu, around 1,300 people suffering from leukemia have been able to find matching stem cell donors using the domestic marrow blood bank system, but only 120 have been able to actually undergo the needed transplant operations. Most have been prevented by financial difficulties.

"We have to do everything we can to expand the registry to give more hope to the millions of leukemia patients around the world," he said.



John D. Mcmannis receives a container with the stem cells from their donor, Wu Yu. Photo by Yang Zhanghuai



Monks and others study the original printed version of the Grand Tibetan Scripture commissioned by the Qing Dynasty emperor Qianlong.

Photo by Zhou Ying

Local Press Revives Ancient Scripture

By Zhou Ying

A new chapter is about to open in the history of an ancient Tibetan text printed under the direction of the Qianlong emperor of the Qing Dynasty.

"Reprinting Emperor Qianlong's edition of the *Grand Tibetan Scripture* is of great significance towards the protection of world cultural and natural heritage," Geng Ying, president of

the World Cultural and Natural Heritage Fund, said Saturday at a symposium on the reprinting of the scripture at the Great Hall of the People.

Actual reprinting of the priceless text will be done by the National Cultural Relic Publishing Company and Beijing Jinglun Culture Communication Company.

The Emperor Qianlong edition was the only version of the text printed

under direct imperial instruction, explaining why it used to be referred to as the "Dragon Scripture." Dragons were traditionally symbols of the emperor in China.

The complete work consists of over 79,000 engraved printing plates that contain over 76 million Chinese characters and weigh a total of around 480 tons. "Collecting all the pieces has been an arduous and time-consuming

task," Su Shishu, president of National Cultural Relic Publishing, said at the Saturday event.

"The *Grand Tibetan Scripture* is not only invaluable in the field of Buddhist culture, it is significant for research of Eastern languages, literature, art, history, philosophy and so on," Su added. "What's more, we'll print it on the same kind of rice paper as the original edition."

University Mess Gets New Lease on Life from Former Students

By Zhang Nan / Xie Lixue

A group of eight graduates of Beijing Union University beat three competitors in bidding for the rights to the Banyuelou cafeteria on that university's campus, Tang Xiaoheng, vice president of the university's College of Arts and Sciences, announced Monday.

Zhao Mingchen, one of the new restaurateurs, and his partners, all former majors in mass media at Beijing Union, are in negotiations to finalize the contract with Guo Xiaofeng, a clerk from the economics management office of the university's logistics department.

"During college, we became good friends and all had the aspiration of running our own business after we graduated," Zhao told *Beijing Today* on Tuesday. "This time, we seized the opportunity to realize our dream."

The formerly university-owned cafeteria opened in 2000, but shut in March 2004 as a result of poor management, low-quality food, inflated prices and



Photo by Wang Xiaoxi

careless service. Shortly after the doors shut, the university announced it would sell the mess hall through public auction.

Zhao and his friends decided to take a chance and scraped together more than 200,000 yuan for their bid. While the other seven new owners, who already have stable jobs, will simply act as shareholders, Zhao will actually be in charge of running the cafeteria.

"I am not doing this to earn lots of money. I intended to use any profits to support poor students' studies and cooperate with student clubs. I hope the restaurant will be a comfortable place for students and professors to spend their spare time," Zhao said.

New Hospital Just for Women

By Wu Chen

Local women have their own place to go for treatment of specifically female ailments thanks to the Sunday opening of the Beijing Wuzhou Women's Hospital.

"Hurry up! Lay on the bed and take off your pants! You'll never hear any nurse or doctor talk like that to patients in our hospital, while such insensitivity is quite common in many other hospitals," Zhou Hong, director of the new facility's gynecology department, told *Beijing Today* Tuesday.

The hospital is a private joint-venture under the supervision of the People's Hospital of Peking University Medical Treatment and Service Corp.

Zhou said the facility differed from others because it treats regular gynecologic problems as seriously as many other hospitals treat severe diseases, such as cancer.

Since it opened its doors, the hospital has seen a daily average of 50 to 60 patients, mostly nearby residents, according to Yan Hengqiu, head of the hospital's marketing department.

On staff are doctors and nurses recruited from all over the country, including some recognized experts who moved over from major public hospitals in Beijing.

One problem facing the new hospital is that its patients are not covered by the national medical insurance program.

"We have contacted American International Assurance Company (Bermuda) about becoming the appointed hospital for its policy holders in Beijing, but we're also trying to come under the fold of the national medical insurance system," Yan told *Beijing Today* on Thursday. He speculated the insurance issue would be resolved by the end of the year.

Radiation from UV Lamp Poisons Dozens of Students

By Jiang Yongzhu

A graduation day celebration in a local restaurant took a tragic turn for 46 young people just out of Renmin University, as they were exposed to dangerous levels of ultraviolet radiation emitted from a germ-killing UV lamp installed in the ceiling.

The students will be subjected to extensive medical checks and tests, starting today, aimed both at determining how to treat them and how they were poisoned. This is the first such case of heavy UV radiation exposure ever reported in this country.

"Even now, I still cannot believe this really happened to us. We went there to celebrate our graduation, have fun and talk about our futures," said one of the victims, surnamed Liu.

UV lamps like the one believed to have poisoned the students are used, mostly in hospitals, restaurants and hotels, to kill air-borne germs. They should only be installed in places where people would not be present, according to a source from the Ministry of Health.

The source, who requested anonymity, said that while production of UV lamps was supervised directly by the ministry, sales were lightly controlled, if at all, and the lamps were available at most stores selling commercial disinfecting products.

It all began when the large group of friends went to Xiaoshizao, a new restaurant opened near the university's west gate, and talked and dined for four hours on June 18.

"When I washed my face that night, it was kind of painful. At first I thought I was having some kind of allergic reaction," Liu recalled. "But then at midnight I woke up because my eyes really hurt. I looked into a mirror and was terrified to see my eyes were totally red and tears were flowing out."

Her 45 classmates showed similar symptoms and all visited Beijing's No. 3 Hospital for physical exams over the following four days. They were then referred to the Beijing Sino-Japan Friendship Hospital, where they were all diagnosed as with having ophthalmia, an eye disorder also known as conjunctivitis, as a result of exposure to ultraviolet rays.

Twenty of the student also suffered from flaking skin and 11 showed abnormal results in some test. Those students were then sent to Beijing's 301 Hospital on June 28 for further examination.

Doctors from both the Sino-Japan Friendship Hotel and 301 Hospital said

that the students were in significant danger, not from their manifest symptoms, but from possible future pathological changes in their blood caused by the radiation.

Ultraviolet radiation can trigger genetic mutation, according to a Dr. Zhang from the 301 Hospital. In conducting scientific research, scientists and doctors never expose people to ultraviolet radiation for more than 10 minutes. Twenty minutes of irradiation has been shown to be enough to cause dangerously traumatic reactions in laboratory rats.

Since there have been no similar cases of such prolonged human exposure, the doctors are unable to predict what will happen to the students. 301 Hospital has already stated it would offer each student two major check-ups per year for free as part of a long-term study of the unusual victims.

Some of the students told *Beijing Today* that just as worrying as their medical prognosis was the attitude of the restaurant's management about the incident. A group of the poisoned students went to talk to the eatery's owner on June 19, at which point he denied that the UV lamp in the ceiling was on the night the students dined there and refused to accept any responsibility.

They then showed him pictures taken that night that clearly showed the light was indeed on. The owner quickly backtracked and said he would like to offer them compensation, a few students recalled.

The question is how. On behalf of the whole group, one student surnamed Zhao demanded the restaurant cover the students' treatment, equaling about 1,200 yuan per head, and buy each of the victims a five-year health insurance policy.

"The insurance could provide basic financial support if something terrible really happens. Since we are young, buying the policies should not be too heavy of a burden for them," Zhao said.

A source from Xinhua Insurance told *Beijing Today* that purchasing five-year health insurance policies for all the students would cost between 50,000 yuan and 60,000 yuan.

Zhao said that while the restaurant's owner agreed to pay for the students' treatment fees, he did not want to buy the insurance. She is still waiting for a clear response on the issue from the owner, who refused to talk with *Beijing Today*.

Zhao noted that there were many other customers in the restaurant on the night in question.



Ma Chunjun showed his wounded arm to Beijing Youth Daily

Photos by Lou Qiyong

Self-defence or Retaliation?

By Zhou Ying

When is self-defence self-defence? The law sanctions self-defence as every citizen's right, but the line between protecting oneself and retaliation can sometimes be hard to define.

According to a *Beijing Youth Daily* report last Wednesday, a taxi driver responded forcefully when five students armed with knives robbed him of his money and driver's license. When they ran off he drove after them and ran one of them over. He then waited for the police to arrive and arrest two of them. The driver, Ma Chunjun, from the North Taxi Company, told *Beijing Youth Daily* that the five students had injured him with a fruit knife and smashed the windshield of his car before running away. "In order to catch them, I had to drive the car and hit one of them, and then wait for the police," he said.

After hearing of this incident, some legal experts expressed that the taxi driver may be guilty of the crime of intentional injury, because his action could not be defined as self-defence. However, many readers called *Beijing Youth Daily* last Thursday to complain about this point of view



Ma Chunjun's Taxi was badly damaged

and offer their support for Ma. They said that everyone should stand up to fight against criminals, and the opinions of the experts did not apply to this event. Some even said they would donate money to Ma if he was required to

pay any medical expenses.

Li Xiaolin, secretary-general of the Criminal Justice Committee from Beijing Bar Association

Viewing this incident from the legal perspective, I can see that what the taxi driver did cannot be defined as self-defence, because the criminals had already run away, which means the aggressive action had stopped. According to the Criminal Law, people should apply proper action to defend themselves at the very moment the aggression is occurring, not afterwards.

However, we should see things depending on the real situation. At that time, all the criminals held knives, so if Ma had defended himself at the time, he would have been in a much more dangerous situation, let alone being able to stop them. So I think the police need to consider giving a lighter punishment.

I personally think that we should praise his courage. But I suggest that when confronting aggression, firstly you should call the police and then assist them, avoiding any illegal methods.

Xia Wei, a lawyer with the local government in Xicheng District

I think that what the taxi driver did can be regarded as self-defence. We should see things from the overall point of view.

According to Chinese law, if the aggression can bring about severe consequences, you can do whatever is necessary to avoid the consequences, even if it involves killing the aggressors. Regarding this incident, I think we can define this robbery as a severe crime, because the aggressors held weapons. So I think as long as the driver did not intend to injure them, his behavior can be defined as self-defence.

Secondly, we should see the robbery as a whole process, including premeditation, robbery, and running away. Therefore, I think the moment that the taxi driver hurt the criminals was simultaneous with when the robbery happened.

In my opinion, every citizen is entitled to attack criminals. If I were a witness, I would help him to arrest the criminals. I am afraid that I cannot totally agree with the comment that the taxi driver should call the police first and wait for them. That could lose the opportunity to stop the thieves.

Connie Wang, a reporter from *The Mirror* newspaper

I can personally understand what the taxi driver did, but we cannot encourage his action. Because after all,

the car is a machine; you cannot know the extent of the injury it could cause.

I think we should take the psychology of the driver into consideration. I mean if the driver drove the car just because he wanted to catch the criminals, I think he cannot be accused of intentional injury. It is quite common and blameless for the driver to try his best to maintain his rights like this.

However, I don't think the driver has the right to hit the criminals with his car. After all, the criminals are human too. Therefore, If the criminals were injured, he should bear a certain responsibility. He can arrest the criminals, but he is not entitled to injure them.

Of course, the police should consider that if he had not hit the criminals, he may have failed to apprehend them. Therefore, I think if the injuries are severe, the driver should take full responsibility; if not, the police should give him a lighter punishment.

Most taxi drivers have experienced robbery, and they usually just accept it. I suggest that drivers should call the police immediately after being robbed, and then they can follow the thieves.

A policeman from a local police station who asked not to be named

If we use common sense, I think the criminals deserved what they got. The taxi driver just wanted to stop them from running away. Therefore I think it is unfair to accuse him of intentional injury. What's more, robbery is the main target of the public security bureau. To some extent, what he did assists our task.

However, viewing this event from legal point of view, both sides must take responsibility. The taxi driver is not entitled to kill the criminals. If he injured the criminals at the moment the aggression was taking place, then we could call it self-defence. But as he responded afterwards, his action was intentional injury.

Personally speaking, I have dealt with some similar cases, and most taxi drivers are threatened with death when being robbed. I really admire Mr. Ma's courage.

Shen Teng, a lawyer from Shenghui Law Office

If the driver just wanted to get his money back, then I think there is no need for him to shoulder responsibility. On the other hand, if he intended to retaliate against the criminals by striking them, then we cannot define it as self-defence.

Bank for Bribes

By Wang Fang

Officials who return bribes through a proposed national public account within a given time limit could be "specially pardoned", said Wang Minggao, leader of the research group "On Punishment and Prevention of Corruption in China in the New Millennium" on June 19.

The group was jointly organized by the Organization Committee and the Disciplinary Committee of the Hunan Provincial Committee of the Communist Party of China.

After five years of research, the group has put forward a suggestion that the National People's Congress, the Central Disciplinary Commission of the Communist Party of China, the Supreme Court and the Supreme Procuratorate and the Ministry of Supervision should consider some special measures.

One of the measures is to open a national account number for bribe-takers to anonymously surrender their illegal gains at any state-owned commercial bank above county level.

Two special decisions should be made: one is that no matter how high or low their ranks, how big or small the bribes taken, if the bribe-takers surrender fully their gains within the timeframe as set, they will not be punished. The other is if they refuse to surrender their bribes in full within the timeframe as scheduled, they will face the maximum penalty.

Other include three interrelated measures: one is to perfect the application and registration system of personal properties for the

state functionaries. The second is to raise their salaries to make them less tempted by bribes. The third is to establish a healthy offence-reporting system with a highest award of 50% of the money recovered.

"The idea is that we'll have triplicate report forms for one surrendered bribe so that the disciplinary departments can know what is going on in the account in time. Moreover, we have stringent requirements for the time limit," said Wang Minggao.

No official response has yet been offered to this suggestion, but opinions from various other areas of society have already been heard.

Han Bing, lawyer of Beijing Hanzhuo Law Office

The idea of a "special pardon" is not valid as long as the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress has the final say. If the crimes can be cancelled totally just thanks to the surrender of the bribes, then the law only exists in name. This special action also overlooks the people offering the bribes. If there is no punishment to the people who get the money, those offering bribes will not be worried. It will not stop them from trying to give money to officials.

Wang Xiumei, professor of the Law Faculty, China People's University

The notion of exemption from criminal prosecution is completely different from a special pardon. Corruption is a crime that cannot just be erased; even if the criminals actively or anonymously surrender their bribes due

to remorse or other reasons, they cannot conceal the fact that they have committed a crime. I think, first of all, we should consider establishing an independent organization to take precautions against corruption, something suggested in the United Nations Convention Against Corruption. Second, we should rectify our regulations on preventing corruption by referring to the criminal laws in other countries in order to improve our anti-corruption legal network. Finally, the establishment of any policies cannot run against the provision of current laws. Such exemptions for bribe-takers seem to convey a message to the public that the officials are privileged. It will affect the principle that everyone is equal in front of the law.

Yue Liling, professor of the Criminology Department, China University of Political Science and Law

This idea might partially make up for financial losses. However, such short-term ideas are not necessarily consistent with the constitution or legal principles. I believe the disadvantages outweigh the advantages. Since the liberation of China, we have only offered special pardons to Japanese war criminals and the last emperor. We have not specially pardoned any common criminals yet. Finally, the surrendering of bribes through simple administrative procedures could endanger the protection of private property.

Fang Zhiyuan, lawyer of Beijing Yifang Law Office

The punishment of the crime is not limited in terms of time. If the bribe-takers

can be specially pardoned within a prescribed time, then how can we deal with the crimes committed after the establishment of this method? Is there going to be a new due time? It makes the present legal system chaotic.

Chen Changbin, vice director of the Anti-corruption Bureau of Xichun Provincial Procuratorate

The establishment of the national account number for bribe-takers to anonymously surrender their money is contradictory to the criminal law currently in effect. In other words, it gives the bribe-takers favourable treatment. As long as they can save the money into this account in time, they will be free. However, the criminal law stipulates clearly that the punishment can only be reduced if they confess.

Li Yongzhong, an expert in anti-corruption research

The special action is a strategic solution. The spread of corruption is closely related to the inadequacies of the current system. In addition, recent anti-corruption practices tell us that many corruption cases are never solved at all. Offering this amnesty to bribe-takers who quickly wake up to their errors is one way to deal with the problem.

Internet users, (from a survey conducted by Xichun Online Company)

62.34% of the Internet users in the survey feel that this method is against the law; 20.78% believe it is not a proper method at all. Only 16.88% think it is worth trying.

More than 20 provinces, autonomous regions and municipalities are experiencing shortages of electric power supply. From April to June this year, the shortage reached an unprecedented overall level of 20 million kilowatts, and the number could soon rise to 30 million kilowatts.



Turn Down That Air Conditioner!

By Dong Nan

Summer time is the traditional peak of electricity consumption in China, and this year the shortages might be felt more acutely. There have been numerous reports recently about the many places around the country facing a shortage of electric power supply.

On July 17, the National Development and Reform Committee announced that prices of electric power in Beijing, Shanghai and Guangzhou would increase by 3.4 fen, 2.5 fen and 2.2 fen per kilowatt-hour respectively. Prices are also set to rise in Tianjin, Chongqing, Zhejiang, Fujian, Yunnan and Guizhou.

Beijing Youth Daily conducted a public survey in Beijing, Shanghai and Guangzhou, on people's ideas about the status of electric power supply and their sense of the need to save electric power. The survey found that though most people were aware of the shortage, many did not pay enough attention to practical solutions to the problem.

Do you know how severe the situation is?

According to the National

Electric Power Supervision Committee, more than 20 provinces, autonomous regions and municipalities are experiencing shortages of electric power supply. From April to June this year, the shortage reached an unprecedented overall level of 20 million kilowatts, and the number could soon rise to 30 million kilowatts.

The survey shows that most respondents (91.6%) were fully aware of the situation.

"I always knew that Beijing had a shortage of water before, but I didn't know about the shortage of electric power as well," Zhang Xiuyuan, a 27-year-old Beijing citizen told *Beijing Today*. "But this year, phrases such as 'a famine of electric power in China' began to appear in newspapers, TV programs and the Internet. I know most places, including Beijing, now have a shortage of electric power."

"I never knew Shanghai had a shortage of electric power before last winter," Beilei, a 20-year-old Shanghai citizen told *Beijing Today*. In the winter of 2003, the shortage of electric power in Shanghai was two million kilowatts, and the municipal government had

to temporarily cut the lighting in many public places, including the renowned holiday resort the Bund.

However, most respondents said they were satisfied with the present electric supply in the three cities: the number was 90.8% in Beijing, 90.4% in Shanghai and 94.7% in Guangzhou.

"Electric power supply is always carefully ensured in big cities such as Beijing and Shanghai. But I know that in rural areas that's not the case," said Liu, a Beijing citizen. "I know many rural areas in Hebei province suffer power cuts very often."

Around Beijing, there are 14 electric power stations that supply power for the capital. However, their production can only meet one third of the city's needs; the rest of the power is provided from nearby areas including Shanxi, Inner Mongolia and Hebei. According to a document released by the Development and Reform Committee of Beijing, to ensure the electric power supply for Beijing, these other provinces and autonomous regions are required to limit their own use of power. These areas have

experienced many power cuts this year. However, Beijing has not had a significant power cut since 1995.

Are you conscientious?

The survey found that most people believed they were conscious of the need to save energy. Around 70% said they realized that if they tried to save electric power every day, it would help to relieve concerns about power shortages.

"I think if everyone saves one kilowatt-hour of electric power everyday, the number would be large and surely could make up the shortage in supply," said Zhou, an 11-year-old Beijing girl.

Only 10% admitted that they weren't too concerned about saving electric power; 84% said they were, and the rest weren't too sure. However, the survey also found that people might not be quite as conscientious as they believed.

When asked "would you turn off the lights when you leave the room," only two thirds said yes; the number for Beijing people was 51%, the lowest of the three cities (it was 61% in Shanghai and 89% in Guangzhou).

"Sometimes when my hus-

band and I go out in the evening, I leave the lights on at home," said Guan Yueyue, a resident in Tongzhou District, Beijing. "I think by doing that, it will put off burglars as they will think people are at home. Our thinking is that we'll just pay the higher electricity fee as we can afford it. If it is a waste though, fine, we will not do it."

Most offices use computers, and many families have them too. However, the survey found that only two thirds of people were used to shutting down their computers or printers after finishing using them, and 3.3% said they never shut them down.

"When I was at college, my computer teacher told me that it was okay if I did not shut down the computer afterwards, so I didn't bother," said Guan.

About 46.2% of the participants also admitted they did not pay much attention to picking up practical tips on energy saving in daily life.

"There are many skills for saving electricity," said Yao Guizhi, a 67-year-old Beijing housewife to *Beijing Today*. "For example, you can save power if you put a plastic film

on foods when you put them in the microwave."

"I just learn this kind of thing from magazines and newspapers. For example, *Beijing Evening News* has many of these tips. But my two sons and their wives never pay attention to such things and think that I am boring whenever I tell them this useful information," she said.

"If you see a street lamp is on in the daytime, would you report it to local city construction bureaus?" When asked this question, less than half of the people answered "yes". However, according to *Beijing Youth Daily*, most people who said "no" complained that they did not know who they should call to report the situation. They suggested that municipal governments should do something to improve the transparency of energy supervision.

Only 38% of the people said that they would remind other people to save electric power; about 30% said they would not; and the rest said it depended.

"I don't remind my sons, their wives or my husband about saving electric power any more," said Yao. "They say I'm boring, or they promise to pay attention and forget about it within one minute. I try my best to save electric power for my family anyway, but never succeed in persuading them to do the same thing."

However, Yao still hopes their minds may change. "The media should do more to encourage people to save power; more people would pay attention than to a common old woman like me."

What to do?

To solve the problem, all the three cities are preparing new measures, including raising electricity prices, charging more at peak periods and even charging more according to the temperatures people set their air conditioners to.

About 91% of the participants said that they supported such measures. However, 36% of the people thought that the prices were already high.

"I think the major reason for the shortage of electric power is that the infrastructure lags behind," said Long, a Beijing resident. "But citizens do have the obligation to save power. As to the price, I think it is high, but it is acceptable."

More than one half of the participants suggested that new laws should be made to make people use electric power reasonably and punish people or enterprises that waste too much.

According to the National Electric Power Company, the shortage of electric power supply would be alleviated by 2005.

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By Wu Chen

Judge Robert Childers of Tennessee Circuit Court has declared a Chinese immigrant couple, He Shaoqiang and Luo Qin, unfit to raise their five-year-old daughter, awarding custody to the American foster family that has raised the child since shortly after her birth.

The court also issued an order terminating the parental rights of the Hes, ending a four-year legal battle that has drawn international attention.

"We decided to appeal to the Tennessee Court of Appeal on May 19. The ten-day trial seemed to be going well for us but the verdict totally ignores the record and twisted the truth. I think if only the judge in the Court of Appeal was fair, we could probably have won back our daughter," He Shaoqiang told *Beijing Today* on Tuesday this week.

"We feel disappointed by the verdict by the Tennessee Circuit Court, and the Chinese Embassy will offer assistance to the couple if they need it," Li Ruiyou, consul of the Embassy of the People's Republic of China in the United States was quoted as saying in a report on Phoenix TV on May 15.

Ask for help

He Shaoqiang was a doctoral candidate of economics at the University of Memphis in 1998 when he was accused of sexually assaulting another student. Although eventually acquitted, Mr. He lost his scholarship. As his wife, Luo Qin, did not speak good English it was hard for her to find a job. Anna Mae was born at this difficult time for her family.

They met Mr. and Mrs. Baker

The Battle for Anna Mae

Chinese immigrant couple deemed unfit parents by US judge



The Hes with Anna

The Hes with a picture of Anna and their other children, Avita and Andy

via the Mid-South Christian Service Center and they showed their willingness to take care of Anna Mae. On February 23, 1999, the Hes signed a temporary contract of foster care with the Bakers, allowing them to visit Anna once a week.

Mr. He said that they had also thought about sending Anna back to China and applied for a passport for her in May 1999. "But Mr. and Mrs. Baker persuaded us not to send Anna back, saying that would make it more difficult for us to see her. They thought it was better if they took care of Anna for us," Mr. He said to *Beijing Today*.

In June, 1999, the Bakers told the Hes that in order to apply for medical insurance for Anna, they had to sign a custody contract.

The Bakers' lawyer told the Hes that they could get Anna back whenever they wanted under this contract, only needing to go the court for some simple procedures. However, they didn't mention that the contract didn't set a date for giving back the child. "As we could not fully understand the meaning of this contract, we signed custody over to the Bakers," said Mr. He.

"I don't quite believe that an adult who has spent so many years in America could not understand

the meaning of the contract. At least, he must know that he should not sign it if he didn't understand it," Liang Shuying, professor in the Department of International Law of China University of Political Science and Law, said to *Beijing Today* on Tuesday.

Give back our daughter

Mr. He said the Bakers started to become unhappy about the frequency of the Hes' visits and suggested changing the number of visits from once a week to once every two weeks. The Hes started to distrust them. In November 1999, Mr. He's economic situation improved as he got his master's degree in information

systems and received several job offers. So the Hes decided they wanted to get Anna back.

They appealed to the Juvenile Court in November 1999. "The judge asked whether we had ever abused Anna and whether we signed a contract with the Bakers offering Anna up for adoption. The Bakers and us both said no. However, they said that their lawyer could not appear in court that day, so they applied for postponement of the verdict for two weeks. And during this time, they counter charged us," Mr. He said.

Accusing the judge

Relations between the Hes and the Bakers deteriorated and in January 2001 the Hes were escorted by police away from the Bakers' residence after an argument over conditions for visitation. As they didn't see Anna for four months after that, the Bakers argued the Hes intended to abandon the little girl. They applied to the Chancery Court to terminate the parental rights of the Hes.

Mr. He said "The police told me not to come back to the Bakers' house. As we know, they have right to shoot if I go to their house under this situation. They deliberately prevented us from going to visit Anna."

So the Hes were now the defendants and D.J. Alissandratos, the judge of the Chancery Court,

released a "no-contact order" in February 2003, forbidding the Hes from visiting Anna. After that, the case dragged on and on, being put off and postponed on numerous occasions.

In October 2003, The Chinese couple accused Alissandratos of being biased towards the Bakers and abusing his power. They also said the "no contact order" was unfair. The complaint was prepared by for the Hes by Li Zhaoyang, a lawyer in San Francisco.

In a hearing on November 14 last year, Alissandratos announced that he would no longer deal with the case and said he hoped a new judge would be appointed to continue to oversee it.

New judge's verdict

As soon as the new judge, Robert Childers, took over the case, he ordered a resumption of the Hes right to visit Anna and held continuous hearings from February 23 to March 2, 2004.

In the Circuit Court, Larry Parrish, the Bakers' attorney, said Mr. He was a pathological liar. He said Anna Mae was born before her parents were married and that they had entered the US on falsified papers. He also said He Shaoqiang had acknowledged providing false information in a visa application. He also accused Luo Qin of losing emotional control when she ran into her daughter with members of the Baker family at a Wal-Mart store in December last year. A disturbance ensued and had to be dealt with by the police.

On May 12, 2004, Judge Childers delivered his verdict. He said the evidence showed "Mr. He to be a person of questionable character. By his own admission he is dishonest." The judge also said Luo Qin was "unstable" and demonstrated a pattern of irrational and bizarre behavior.

The court also found that the Hes willfully abandoned and provided no support for their daughter, Anna Mae, from January 29 to June 20, 2001. Childers also ruled that the Hes sought custody of the child only to prevent their deportation. "The court concludes, by clear and convincing evidence, that there has been parental misconduct by the Hes," the ruling said.

"We're so relieved and proud that Anna is going to be allowed to wake up in the same bed that she woke up in since she was 3 weeks old," Jerry Baker said in court, quoted in an AP report on May 13.

Mr. He angrily denounced the verdict. "This is a travesty of justice. It's unbelievable," he said.

However, Professor Liang Shuying told *Beijing Today*, "If the evidence is considered sound and the laws are properly applied, then there can be no problem with the verdict."

Assistance

A group of nine lawyers, including a professor from Harvard University, have all offered to help the Hes voluntarily. Li Zhaoyang is the only Chinese; the other eight lawyers are all Americans.

"I think it will be possible to get back the parental rights, but I cannot tell whether the Hes can also get custody, as it is really hard to tell whether it is in the child's best interest," Li Zhaoyang told *Beijing Today*. However, he also said that he personally thought staying with her birth parents would be best for Anna.

Li also said, "I think the Bakers also love Anna Mae very deeply, but because Tennessee is a conservative southern state, they have a feeling of natural superiority. My American friends here in San Francisco all feel this case is unbelievable."

A citizens' group, the Greater Memphis United Chinese Association, has promised to continue helping the couple pay their legal bills.

"We will stick to the case until we get a fair verdict. We will keep appealing as far as the Federal Supreme Court if needed," Mr. He said to *Beijing Today*. "Some people have said that we didn't consider the feelings of our child and kept on appealing, even though it might have an unhappy influence on her life. Actually on May 7, 2002, we suggested compromising and taking care of Anna with the Bakers together, but they refused."

By Dong Nan

Serious abuses in implementation of the 2003 central budget were revealed in the annual audit report compiled by China's Auditor-general, Li Jinhua, and presented to a meeting of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress last Wednesday. News of the report's findings has spread quickly around China.

The audit, which looked into 55 ministries and commissions under the State Council of China, found extensive evidence of government funds being embezzled by local officials.

Beijing Today reported the release of the report on June 25.

Fraud

In the report, Li pointed out that embezzlement and fraud were not uncommon. He disclosed that seven ministries had obtained a total of 96.73 million yuan more than their actual requirements by cheating on the numbers, for instance in terms of numbers of staff or through fabricating construction projects.

Though the report did not specify which seven ministries they were, it mentioned several institutions under the State Forestry Bureau as an example of the problem. These offices had fabricated "anti-desertification projects" to get interest-deducted loans worth four million yuan.

The report also said 41 out of the 55 ministries and commissions under the State Council had embezzled as much as 1.42 billion yuan in funds allocated for special projects in order to construct residence and office buildings for their own departments.

For example, since 1999, the State General Administration of Sport has embezzled 131 million yuan from the country's Olympic special funds to build its own residential community, to distribute subsidies to officials and open up its own companies.

"We do not have much to say, even if you come to us for an interview. We do not have more to tell you; we will respond after a period of time," said one official who refused to give his name to CCTV after the report was published.

Improper use of the central budget was another big problem. During 2003, the Ministry of Finance allocated 3.114 billion yuan for their budgeted construction projects. However, only 1.261 billion yuan was used, leaving another 1.853 billion yuan or 64.74 percent unused.



Li Jinhua

In the State Power Corporation, questionable decision-making resulted in 3.28 billion yuan going missing in direct or potential losses. Thirty-five former leaders of the corporation have been arrested in connection.

The misuse of loans and budgets caused even worse problems, Li's report found.

In the construction of new embankments along the Yangtze River, where floods broke dams and embankments and killed thousands in 1998, officials colluded with builders to embezzle government investment. More than half of the projects Li looked into were found to be dubious.

When interviewed about the report by CCTV, an official named Li Jin in the project administration bureau even complained. "It was us who invited the Audit Bureau to come and have a check. They published this data just to get publicity."

On June 30, the Audit bureau published an announcement that Li Jin's words were untrue, and released a document from the administration bureau saying it recognized the mistakes it had made, and that measures would be taken to correct the situation. As to Li Jin's words, the administration bureau said that the bureau had not authorized him to accept interviews.

According to Hubei Procuratorate, from the end of 2003, around 30 officials were found to have been involved in embezzlement of funds allocated for Yangtze River dam projects.

Disaster relief funds misused

Serious financial malpractice also exists in the use of disaster relief funds allocated by the central government, said the report.

Nine of the 14 flood-hit coun-



Emergency flood relief work in Huaihe in July, 2003

Photos by Photocom

ties in the Huaihe River Valley, which were mainly in Henan, Anhui and Jiangsu provinces, got 136 million yuan from the disaster relief fund, accounting for 19 percent of the compensation fund for house reconstruction in the area.

For example, Huoqiu County in Anhui Province embezzled 3.6 million yuan, money which should have been distributed to 1,804 households for house construction. In Funan County, Anhui, 17 cadres from three towns pocketed 200,000 yuan earmarked by the central government for the resettlement of people in the flood discharge area. The officials had made false reports on the number of victims in order to get more money.

The same problem was also found in Yunnan Province in earthquake relief, said Li.

By the end of March this year, the central finance department had earmarked 120 million yuan for Dayao, an earthquake-hit area in Yunnan. But up to now, 51.74 million yuan has not been used and is still being held back. The report said some departments used money from the relief fund to balance their local budget or build hotels and restaurants.

On June 26, the local Yunnan government told *China Youth Daily* that regulating work is underway in Dayao and around ten local officials have already been dismissed from their positions.

Cheating on loans

Cheating on loans is another serious problem, according to the report, Feng Mingchang, owner of several corporations in Foshan, Guangzhou Province made out false financial report forms and got loans of 7.4 billion yuan from the local bank. Most of the loans were not used in the development of his corporations but simply churned into Feng's own accounts or even remitted abroad illegally.

For example, in 1999, Feng borrowed 500 million yuan from the Nanhai branch of the Industrial and Commercial Bank of China, to buy a forest supposedly covering 100,000 hectares in Malaysia. In fact, the forest covered 64,000 hectares and cost 21 million yuan. The rest of the money was snatched up illegally by Feng.

Lin Yuxing, former president of the Nanhai branch, has been arrested for colluding with Feng. He was one of around a hundred government and bank officials who were found to be involved in Feng's case. Most have been dismissed or arrested.

Other real estate businessmen were found to have gained dubious housing and automobile loans from banks, often through colluding with bank officials. For example, in 2003, Shanghai Waigaoqiao Branch, Industrial and Commercial Bank of China released a housing loan of 71 million yuan to Yao Kangda, a common citizen who then used the money to buy

himself 128 houses.

Big news

Li Jinhua's report aroused considerable interest. After hearing it, many members of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress voiced their opinions.

"Some ministries really go too far," said commissioner Li Meifang. "The State Forestry Bureau was found to have embezzled 33 million yuan, and what happened to the money remains unknown."

"The government should solve these problems. Otherwise, the situation will get even worse," said commissioner Xing Shizhong.

The media has also reported on the issue in great detail. "It is the time for the government to work with perseverance to find out the defects in the present financial system, as revealed in this audit, and to solve the problems with openness and transparency. This is really a test for the government," remarked *Nanfang Daily*, a Guangzhou based newspaper on June 28.

"On the one hand, no one doubts that the report is welcome. We admire the courage of the Audit Bureau and Auditor-general Li. On the other hand, we doubt whether all the embezzlement and various financial crimes discovered will be investigated further by related national departments," Zhou Yuhua, a retired official told *Beijing Today*.

By Sheng Mingming

Guan Xianglin's new book *Walk Alone* tells the story of his journey, a 300,000-km trek of 18 years during which he collected more than 10,000 items of rare folk artworks, as well as took over 60,000 pictures.

At the Shanghai Folk Arts Expo held in March this year, Guan was hailed as a man who had devoted his life to protecting and promoting a tradition which is in danger of fading away.

Life-changing accident

As a teenager in the 1970s, Guan worked as a repairman at a power station in his hometown, Huaibei, in northern Anhui Province. One night in September 1978, he slipped and fell from a height of 13 meters while performing maintenance work. Initially it looked as though he would be paralyzed from the waist down.

Recovery seemed unlikely and Guan once tried to commit suicide by taking a bottle of sleeping pills, but gradually he started to improve. With his family's support, he made incredible progress in the next two years and was eventually able to stand up, and begin walking again. During his recuperation, he had spent most of his time learning about art. His narrow escape prompted him to ponder the true meaning of life.

Guan had always been inspired by stories of travel, so he devised a plan to journey around China by bicycle, discovering the arts produced by ordinary people. "Art is not just about genius," he said later. "It's based on the real life of all people."

On August 28, 1983, 24-year-old Guan set off from Shanghai on his bicycle, with just over 30 yuan in his pocket.

On the road

Guan originally planned just to take photographs as he traveled. But after a chance encounter with the head of a folk art museum in Zhejiang Province, he began to notice that folk arts and crafts were rapidly disappearing in the countryside, and the authorities' preservation work seemed wholly inadequate. So he started collecting samples as well.

Guan covered a lot of ground on his bike, as far as Zhejiang, Fujian, Hainan, Sichuan, and even Qinghai. He had many narrow escapes, once being surrounded by a pack of wolves, encountering robbers several times and nearly starving.

During the following two years and four months of lonely travel, Guan visited more than 20 ethnic minorities and over 1,000 villages, collecting more than 3,000 rare folk artworks. He recorded his journey with more than 10,000 pictures.

Guan found more and more evidence that local skills in woodcarving, stone carving and paper cuts that had been listed as protected were rapidly dying out. But as he wrote in *Walk Alone*, it was meetings with people like woodcarver Bai Mudiao in Zhejiang and paper-cut artist Ku Shulan that gave him the determination to promote what remained. Ku Shulan, aged 81, had already gained recognition as a paper cut master from UNESCO. Guan was shocked to discover that the old lady was living a difficult life in a shabby house in the countryside, doing laborious



Guan interviews Mosuo people at Lugu Lake, Yunnan.

Lonely Walker

It seems there's little that can stop Guan Xianglin. Despite serious injuries and other crises, he's traveled alone through remote villages, deserts and mountainous regions of China over the past 18 years, trying to discover and record China's ethnic and folk arts.



A clay dog from Henan

Photos by Guan Xianglin

'Art is rooted in the real life of all ethnic groups. Some folk arts will never return once they die out.'



Taking photos of local residential buildings along the Nu River, Yunnan.

housework and taking care of her husband who was in poor health.

The person that impressed Guan the most was 69-year-old woodcarver Bai Mudiao from the coastal part of Zhejiang Province. According to Guan, despite being partially paralyzed, the old man's level of skill was amazing. He could carve fishing scenes, or people planting crops on short pieces of wood just a few inches long. However, this old craftsman was the only person left in his area who had learned this skill.

"I could tell how sad he was when he said no one wanted to learn the craft any more. My opinions about Chinese folk art began to change, and I realized that it was not inferior to other arts from other parts of the

world. Over the course of my trip, I gradually took on the idea of protecting folk art as my responsibility," Guan said.

Setting off again

After coming home from his lengthy trip, Guan returned to normal life, rejoining his work unit and later getting married. But he never gave up his plan, and continued to collect folk artworks.

On May 16, 1998, he set off on his travels again. He planned to spend three years driving around the country, conducting a thorough investigation of the remaining folk arts of China's 56 ethnic groups. This time he was better equipped: a Cherokee jeep, advanced video and photography equipment and other travel necessities had been provided by companies who were moved by his lofty ideal and wanted to help.

As many of China's ethnic minorities live in remote mountainous or sparsely populated regions, Guan's journey was at times dangerous. In *Walk Alone*, he describes his feelings of loneliness and fear during the journey.

"One night I slept in an unused hut on a remote mountain. I lay down in my sleeping bag and just hoped I could keep quiet and safe in the darkness so I wouldn't be discovered by wild animals. I dared not light a fire to make food, or even use my flashlight. It was pitch dark, and the

wind was blowing through the trees and I could feel that my shirt was totally wet. And then the familiar feeling of loneliness came to me again."

He was bitten on the leg by a deadly coral snake on September 10, 1998. Quickly, he bound his upper thigh, then made a 2-cm-long cut around the bite with his knife, and then tried to squeeze out the poisoned blood while washing the wound till it whitened with roadside brook water. He escaped death again, but he still carries the scar on his leg.

On July 19, 1999, during a violent storm in Yunnan, Guan's jeep slipped down a 10-meter slope with a steep gradient. Fortunately, the jeep didn't turn over. Guan was able to climb out and get help. He returned with villagers who were able to pull his jeep back up to the road.

Living Buddha

Guan has numerous stories behind the items of folk art in his collection.

He once stayed with an old couple of the Hani ethnic minority. When Guan was about to leave, the old man gave him a bracelet, saying "You'll be blessed with the bracelet, young man." It was a precious heirloom engraved with emblems of the Hani language to ward off evils.

An 80-year-old woman of the Miao ethnic minority gave Guan numerous items from her bridal trousseau, such as blankets and items of clothing, when she

found out the purpose of his travels.

Guan makes a big effort to call all these warm-hearted people every Spring Festival. He's also been diligent in mailing his photos to them.

Possibly the most curious item in his collection is a Tibetan sword. One day while driving in a particularly remote area of Tibet, Guan heard a cry for help and searched for the faint voice. He found an old man who was in some distress and drove him to the nearest county hospital straight away. The old man had had a heart attack, but after he recovered he gave Guan his saber and told him to wear it while traveling in Tibet.

Guan did as the old man suggested and was surprised to discover people treating him with great reverence and muttering quiet prayers wherever he went. He was later told the old man he saved must have been a Living Buddha, something people apparently recognized from the sword.

Woman behind the protector

Guan is a loving

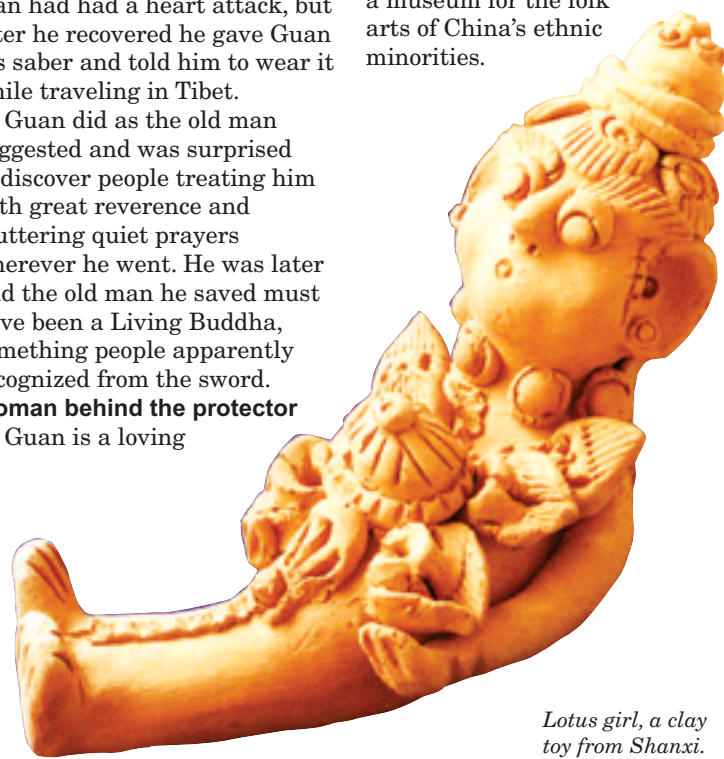
husband, but he expresses some regret about the pressures his cause has had on his family. "I'm not a good husband, nor a good father. But I have a good wife who has done all she could in support of my travels," he says.

Guan's home in Huaibei, Anhui is small and simple, but clean and warm. His wife has learnt to make ends meet on a relatively small budget. Whenever her husband was in need of money, whether for traveling or buying an artwork, she would try all means to help out.

Their daughter, now a senior middle school student, shows a keen interest in the traditional arts herself and is good at playing the *erhu*. She learned to save 5 jiao by walking home instead of taking a bus after school when she was still at junior middle school, because she knew her father needed money to continue with his cause.

Waiting for the "I'm fine" night call before going to bed has become a routine for the mother and daughter, the little girl told us. The infinite love and support from his wife and daughter is the mainstay of Guan's lonely journey.

Looking ahead, Guan says, "Art is rooted in the real life of all ethnic groups. Some folk arts will never return once they die out." He is determined to continue his travels and arouse society to the need to save these fading national treasures. He's also planning to set up a museum for the folk arts of China's ethnic minorities.



Lotus girl, a clay toy from Shanxi.

Virtual Girl Fights Japanese Anime Invasion



By Yu Shanshan

The beginning of the story is simple: when he met Li Xinyu in January 2003, Wu Qi, still studying for his Master of Animation at Beijing Film Academy, recognized in her the perfect model for his dream project of reviving the art of animation in China.

Based on the image of Li, Wu planned to create a novel virtual idol called E-Xinxin, who would not be confined just to the Internet, but would also appear on the big screen, on TV, in cartoon books, and ultimately as licenced merchandizing in the form of toys, stationary, tableware, cosmetic cases.

"According to the Chinese Cartoon and Animation Institute, the total income of cartoon and animation related products is around 11.7 billion yuan, but 80 percent of that is taken by foreign products, mostly from Japan. To let more people know us and to grow faster, we have created this idea, a first ever in the world," Wu told *Beijing Today* Saturday in a telephone interview from Guangzhou, one of ten stops of E-Xinxin's two-month promotional tour around China.

Explain the project's name, Wu said that "E" is the first letter of "Eight" for the eight themes of E-Xinxin I products released in April - *Sexy, Wisdom, Save, Fantasia, Wild, Sentimental, Angel and Pure*. "Xinxin" is the nickname of Li Xinyu.

Work on the project began last spring, while Beijing was in the midst of the SARS epidemic. Before that, Wu had already persuaded many companies to provide support for his project, as well as some government organizations like the State Administration of Radio, Film and Television and the China Federation of Literary and Art Circles Publishing Corporation. "I've been studying in this animation field for many years, so I clearly know which company needs what kind of projects to activate its idle resources," Wu said.

After deciding the eight themes and the song that represents each theme - for example, Celine Dion's *Cuz You're My Man* for *Fantasia*, which tells a love and war story between an earth girl and an alien man in a five-minute long animation film, different groups will then take up a theme that belongs to their field - three-dimensional animation, two-dimensional animation, real life



Li Xinyu (below) and various incarnations of her alter-ego, E-Xinxin.



movies or digital animation.

There is a key group of around 20 animation graduates from Beijing Film Academy in charge of the animation part. Wu himself took on all the script writing, with the help of Li Xinyu, as well as the shooting of the real life movies. To save money, they had to find ways simplify and speed up the process. For example in the digital movie *Wisdom*, some of Crystal CG (a supporting company)'s computer rendering for completed projects is used for the background. "Theoretically, we could reach the effect of *Final Fantasy*, but we had limited time and people. We completed all the CG (computer graphics) animation in five months - in the last period we had only three people working day and night. Therefore we couldn't make it too delicate," Chen Dagang, CG animation director of E-Xinxin, told *Newsweekly* in March.

When the visuals were nearly complete, Li Xinyu went into the studio to record songs for the eight movies. Since the begin-

ning of the project, Li has put a stop to all her movie and TV-soap work and thrown herself totally into the E-Xinxin project and subsequent promotional activities around China.

Wu is confident Li's sacrifice will pay off. "You look just like an animated girl," Wu told Li, who is one-quarter Russian, the first time they met.

Li started her acting career at 17, but so far has only had a handful of supporting roles in a few TV soaps and three Hong Kong movies. "If E-Xinxin is successful, people will have more interest to look at her real-life model, which may push Li's acting career forward," Wu said.

This will be one of the three signs proving that E-Xinxin has succeeded, Wu says. The others are that E-Xinxin products will sell like Snoopy toys in McDonalds, and even in their own chain stores; and that a TV program and online forum hosted together by the real Li Xinyu and her virtual image will have their own audience, and they will argue over certain hot topics.

Now E-Xinxin II is almost

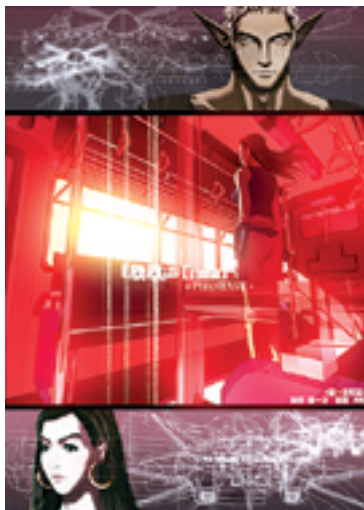
completed. In this second phrase, Xinxin will have her new images of clay sculptures, paper cuts and ink paintings, which, Wu believes, will help save those traditional art forms from disappearing. And original songs will take the place of re-recordings of foreign hits. Wu hopes the songs will become so popular that people will sing them in karaoke bars. Meanwhile a computer game is also under development. He plans to release E-Xinxin II and III together by the end of this year, and when the market is ready, "we'll make a digital movie, maybe an acting movie, in which digital people will act together with real actors, like in *Kill Bill*," he said.

E-Xinxin is not the first virtual idol in China. In September 2001, Chyna, a totally digital girl was launched at China Millennium Museum, appearing in a five-minute mini movie. Despite ambitious predictions of a brilliant future, she quickly vanished without a trace.

Wu maintains the failure was due to Chyna's creators "only digging one hole." He says they have avoided making the same mistakes. "Firstly, it was only a five-minute movie, shown nowhere else but the China Millennium Museum - without any further development plans. The investors couldn't see any prospect of recouping their money, so they choose not to give any more," he said. "However right from the beginning, our eight short music movies have come into the right distribution channels, and we have been able to provide investors with a clear plan for future development, step by step."

"Secondly, Chyna was a totally virtual person, closely following the Japanese idol production way. Our technology is far behind theirs. Chinese cartoon and animation fans won't buy products simply out of patriotism, they always want the better one. The point of their doomed failure is that they lost themselves, their own spirit, which is our advantage."

Wu stresses that the whole process of making E-Xinxin was the opposite to how it is done in other countries. "Lora Croft was a character in a game first, then Angelina Jolie was found to give her life. But in China, this period is shortened - real life 'Lora' lives and grows with her virtual idol, pulling money from more than two channels - that's really a Chinese originality," Wu said.



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What's on DVD

By Wang Yumeng

**Dodgeball: A True Underdog Story**

Not much new or original in the way of a plot in this offbeat film. A small local gym is threatened with extinction by a gleaming sports and fitness palace unless a group of social rejects can rise to victory in the ultimate dodgeball competition.

**Around the World in 80 Days**

Jules Verne's classic adventure tale of Phileas Fogg's epic journey around the world has had many movie adaptations, with the most famous being the Michael Anderson 1956 retelling starring David Niven. The 2004 version directed by Frank Coraci takes a different look at the story and centers the action around Passepartout (Jackie Chan), Fogg's manservant.

**The Terminal**

The Terminal tells the story of Viktor Navorski (Tom Hanks), a visitor to New York from Eastern Europe, whose homeland erupts in a fiery coup while he is in the air en route to America. Stranded at Kennedy Airport with a passport from nowhere, he is unauthorized to actually enter the United States and must improvise his days and nights in the terminal's international transit lounge until the war at home is over.

Disney
on Ice

By Yu Shanshan

A mid-summer spectacular on ice, bound to be a hit with the kids, is coming to Beijing later this month. Marking the 100th birthday of Walt Disney, a performance named *Disney 100th Anniversary Magical Road Show on Ice* will staged at Capital Gymnasium from July 20 to 25.

Over sixty of Disney's best-known cartoon characters; Goofy, Pinocchio, Snow White, Cinderella, Pocahontas, and characters from *Toy Story*, *Lion King*, *Aladdin*, *Mulan*, and *A Bug's Life*, led by the king and queen of the Disney Empire, Micky Mouse and his girlfriend Minnie, will take the rink in eleven episodes, lasting two hours.

The performers are actually skating champions from countries including the US, Russia, Japan and Australia. In a pantomime directed by Art Kenpel and composed by Stan Beard, they will dance on ice to the sound of familiar Disney tunes like *Beauty and the Beast*, *A Whole New World*, *Can You Feel the Love Tonight* and *Colors of the World*.

The production, featuring the beautifully choreography of Sarah Kwaraha, will transport audiences from a tropical jungle to The Great Wall of China.

One show, on July 23, will be performed in English.

Admission: 80, 180, 280, 380, 500 yuan

Billboard Singles Top 5

Title	Artist	Album
Burn	Usher	Confessions
Confessions Part II	Usher	Confessions
The Reason	Hoobastank	The Reason
If I Ain't Got You	Alicia Keys	The Diary of Alicia Keys
Slow Motion	Juvenile Featuring Soulja Slim	Juve the Great



Official UK Singles Top 5

Title	Artist	Album
Obviously	McFly	Obviously (CD-Single)
Everytime	Britney Spearman	In the Zone
I Don't Wanna Know	Mario Winans	Hurt No More
Roses	Outkast	Speakerboxxx/ The Love Below
Dragostea Din Tei	O-Zone	Dragostea Din Tei (CD-Single)



On the US Billboard chart, for the second week in a row, Usher maintains his hold on the top two slots. *Burn* – the second single from his LaFace/Zomba set *Confessions* – remains No. 1 for the seventh week in a row, while third single *Confessions Part II* is right behind for the second week.

Adding the run of *Burn* to *Yeah!* featuring Lil Jon and Ludacris, which hit the top of the chart in May, brings the artist's

tally to 19 consecutive weeks at No. 1. Last week, Usher cemented the record for the longest time spent of any artist at No. 1 on a Billboard pop singles chart since their introduction in 1940.

On the UK Official Chart, McFly have bumped Britney off the top spot and have scored their second Official Chart No.1 with their latest single, Obviously.

McFly told Radio 1 that being at the top of the chart is all a bit surreal:

"Being number one is the weirdest feeling because you know how you see people have a number one and you're like 'Oh my God, they've had a number one'. And when you're number one you're like 'Oh my God, I've had a number one'."

"You don't really know how to feel because you never expect to get there. Things we've been dreaming about for years and years and like now we're here and sort of like, wow."

WORLDWIDE

Destiny's Child Reborn

After a two-year hiatus, the Grammy-winning R&B trio is recording a new album and has just announced their first live gig since 2002.

The troika of Beyonce Knowles, Kelly Rowland and Michelle Williams are planning to hit the stage in Los Angeles in September to preview songs from their forthcoming album. That concert will be taped, and one of the tunes will be featured on Pepsi's *Play for a Billion* game show in September.

The Destiny divas' sixth album will hit record racks in November, followed by a tour. It will be the official follow-up to 2001's *Survivor*, which sold more than 8 million copies and earned the group a Grammy for the hit title track. **(E! Online)**

Beyonce Inspires Fragrance Collection

Tommy Hilfiger Toiletries has unveiled a new women's fragrance collection inspired by Beyonce.

True Star, which contains contrasting florals and notes of toasted grains, was introduced Monday at a launch party in London. The 22-year-old singer attended the event dressed in a blue gown.

The collection, which includes eau de parfum, body lotion, shower gel and fragrance satin shimmer, will be available in October, the company said.

Beyonce will be featured in a TV ad campaign singing *Wishing on a Star* a cappella. A national print campaign photographed by Mario Testino will show "Beyonce in a way she's never been seen before," the company said. **(AP)**

Bob Dylan Awarded Honorary Degree from Scottish University

US rock icon Bob Dylan was back on the road, playing sell-out gigs in Scotland after collecting an honorary degree from the University of Saint Andrews.

Dylan was made a doctor of music during a graduation ceremony Wednesday at the university, whose students include Prince William, the elder son of Prince Charles and the late Princess Diana.



Destiny's Child



Beyonce

The singer-songwriter, whose hits include *Like a Rolling Stone* and *Mr Tambourine Man*, sat almost motionless on stage, occasionally yawning and leafing through his programme, waiting for his moment to collect his honour.

"Bob Dylan's life as a writer and singer has the aspect of vocation, of calling and his is an art of the most venturesome risk and the most patient endurance," Neil Corcoran, a life-long Dylan fan and an English professor who in 2002 put together a compilation of scholarly essays on Dylan's work, said at the ceremony.

"He's spent a lifetime applying himself to such received forms of art as folk, blues, country and rock music," he said.

Dylan was playing the first of two sell-out concerts in Glasgow on Thursday, after appearing last Sunday at the annual Fleadh festival in London. He starts a late-summer tour of the US with Willie Nelson on August 6 in New York. **(AFP)**

Oops! Britney to Do Marriage Again

Just six months after a quickie Las Vegas wedding and annulment, the sidelined pop tart is at it again, confirming her engagement to dancer Kevin Federline.

Star magazine claims the big to-do will go down November 20 in front of 200 guests, five groomsmen and five bridesmaids in Los Angeles or Spears' native Louisiana.

The marriage will be Spears' second. Her first ring exchange, with hometown pal Jason Alexander, then 22, while official, was a nonstarter. The union was deep-sixed just 55 hours after it began.

The marriage also will be the first for Federline, 26, who, while a stranger to matrimony, is no stranger to other hallowed institutions, such as fatherhood. Federline has a two-year-old daughter with former Moesha star Shar Jackson. The ex-couple is expecting their second child in July.

Spears and Federline became an item in April. Per USA Today, the two first met in 2000 when they were on the same tour – she was the headlining act; he was dancing in the opening act. In the small-world department, Federline hoofed it up as one of Timberlake's dancers at the 2002 MTV Video Music Awards. **(E! Online)**



Spears and Federline



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加裕华装饰

Poster Boys

By Wang Yumeng

Since it opened in 1998, the great local movie poster shop Movie Fan changed its name to Workshop for Visual Art and moved last fall to the Left Bank Community (Zuoan Gongshe) Commercial Street. That latest incarnation is a bright, spacious shop stocked with a fascinating range of posters sure to satisfy lovers of movies, art and anyone looking for something cool to put on a wall.

All the posters on offer are imported straight from the UK, France and the US and then laminated or framed at the store's workshop. Subjects stick to the movie theme, ranging from the newest blockbusters and indie hits to past classics, with prices starting at just 12 yuan and going all the way up to 1,000 yuan.

Get deep, or get blue, with a mid-sized poster for *The Big Blue* (198 yuan), a visceral and turbulent, yet strangely beautiful cinematic experience that plumbs the souls of a pair of competitive deep-sea divers who are at once best friends and bitter rivals. Undisputable classic *Gone with the Wind* gets aptly grand treatment in a huge, striking black and white poster priced at 498 yuan.

Likely to appeal to a different strain of movie fan is a poster for *Trainspotting*, the film adaptation of a novel by Irvine Welsh about a crowd of amoral and violent heroin addicts running together in Edinburgh. This big print (498 yuan) is sure to make a statement in a dorm room, hipster pad or office. July is prime time for poster shopping, as the Workshop is running a 15 percent-off sale early in the month to celebrate its seventh birthday.

Where: No.8 Zuoan Gongshe (Left Bank Community) Commercial Street, Haidian

Open: 9 am - 9 pm

Tel: 6257 1535

Photos by Wang Yumeng



T-shirts with Tradition

By Sun Ling

Clothes don't get much simpler than the T-shirt, but worn well, those staples of slacker wardrobes can cut it as high fashion. A key to T-shirt success is individuality, and that is where the C-Pix store, a specialist in top tees printed with distinctly Chinese patterns and symbols, comes in. The store stocks many designs of T-shirts, most available in paired sets (though they can be bought individually). The shirts in one duo are printed with images of *menshen*, traditional protective spirits that are posted on both sides of a home's door during Spring Festival to ward away ghosts and evil spirits. The menshen on the shirts look alike, but are not exactly identical, to distinguish the woman's shirt from the man's. Another interesting design called "*Liu Hai Xi Chan*" (Liu Hai playing with a toad) portrays a little boy holding a string of coins and playing with a big toad. The very traditional picture comes from an



Photo by Li Shuzhuan

ancient fairy tale in which a boy helps a toad and then the amphibian morphs into a beautiful girl and marries him. Again, such paintings are normally hung during Spring Festival, but in this case it also makes for a very special T-shirt. Aside from traditional pictures, many T-shirts feature flowing Chinese calligraphy. Some sets in that selection are perfect for lovers, as each shirt carries a half character that only becomes complete when the tees are next to each other. All shirts come in three styles: sleeveless, short-sleeved and long-sleeved. The tanks and short-sleeved versions go for 148 yuan per pair (70 yuan for women's shirts and 78 yuan for men's), while the long-sleeved shirts fetch 185 yuan (90 yuan for the women's and 95 yuan for men's). That's a bit pricey for a tee in this city, but C-Pix's products make up for the added expensive with plenty of style, distinction, national pride and fashionable individuality.

Where: Tuanjiehu Lu, opposite the east gate of Tuanjiehu Park, Chaoyang

Open: 10 am - 9 pm

Tel: 8596 8161

Just Joking

By Wang Yue

A favorite of mischievous students and entertainers, the Zhengren Zhuanjie store in the Xidan Huawei Center stocks all kinds of gags to add fun and surprise to any situation. And most of the gags go for just around 10 yuan. One of the most harmless tricks is the "invisible ink power", which when mixed with water can be used to write messages only revealed when heated over a flame or with an iron. Slightly more fiendish is the "fake cola drink" - mix some of the harmless powder into water and it takes on the appearance of cola without the flavor, sure to freak out a friend.

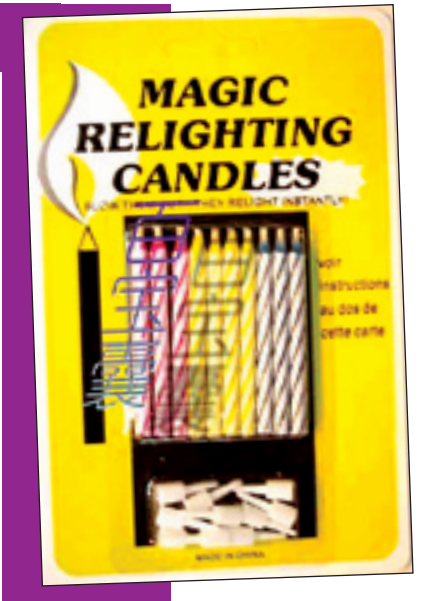
To up the fear factor, invest in some "blood capsules". Pop one in your mouth, crunch down and wait for the screams to start as realistic blood oozes out - just like in the movies! Create similar discomfort with "sneezing powder", "blood soap" and other icky gags.

The store also stocks a range of Halloween masks, priced at 25 yuan to 90 yuan each.

Where: B2, fourth floor, Huawei Center, 130 Xidan Beidajie, Xicheng

Open: 9:30 am - 10 pm

Tel: 1352155207



realistic and priced at just 20 yuan. Whimsical "water balls" come shaped like white mice, pumpkins, turds and other bizarre objects and cost only 5 yuan a piece.

www.rich8.com/8/119119119

The Xiaohuwang toy shop offers many goofy items like little cats and ghosts that make noises and cost around 30 yuan. The virtual shelves also offer a range of authentic magic props.

<http://shop1296510.taobao.com>

Online tricks

The Baibaonang online store is a virtual treasure trove of fun toys like "Crazy Spider" (36 yuan) that has glowing green eyes, makes noises and can creepily crawl up the wall. Even more willy-inspiring are fake snakes made of plastic yet surprisingly

Shortcut To Yunnan

By Sun Ling

Beijingers with visions of a fascinating vacation to beautiful and diverse Yunnan Province can get a quick fix of the distant area by popping into Zuori Jinri, a small store on bustling Yandai Xiejie near Houhai. The artist owner travels to Yunnan about once every three months, collecting traditional handicrafts from different areas of the province such as Lijiang, Dali, Ruili and Xishuangbanna.

The first items to catch most customers' eyes are woodcarvings of different colors, styles and sizes, many made according to ancient methods, hanging on the opposite wall. One large, intricate carving features two fish that form a circle around a woman with bells hanging off its bottom (1,200 yuan). The ancient design is a symbol of fertility and wishes for bountiful babies.

The store also stocks many decorative wood plates carved with characters from the Dongba language of the Naxi culture. These smaller yet beautiful pieces fetch between 25 yuan and 200 yuan.

In another corner sit a selection of wood dolls outfitted in minority



Photo by Li Shuzhuan

costumes and priced at 100 yuan for a pair, one boy one girl. A lower shelf carries several pairs of attractive embroidered shoes (80 yuan a pair). They all have black or pink bases adorned with threaded pictures of blooming peonies.

Arguably the most exquisite pieces in the store are sadly not for sale. Every customer should take a few minutes to inspect an amazing basket for carrying babies covered in hand-stitched embroidery and silver decorations. Another item too special to sell is a ceremonial hat adorned with China's traditional four romantic elements: wind, flowers, snow and the moon.

Where: No. 52 Yandai Xiejie, Xicheng

Open: 9:30 am - midnight

Tel: 8911 2637

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On Monday, Beijing Today held its third online chat about studying abroad, this time focusing on Australia. In the Study Abroad Salon was Katharine Campbell, the counselor for education, science and training from the Australian Embassy in Beijing. Ms. Campbell corresponded with dozens of Beijing Today readers and answered nearly 30 questions covering education quality, choosing universities and living in Australia.

Beijing Today is inviting education counselors from various embassies in Beijing to participate in online chats through our website, bjtoday.ynet.com. Anyone interested can enter the chatroom and communicate with the experts directly, or send questions to the host, Ayi, at ayi@ynet.com.

Our next guest is Counselor Yuri A. Meteleu, representative of the Russian Center for International Cultural and Scientific Cooperation.

Time: 3-4pm, Tuesday, July 6

Life in Australia:

I love kangaroos! I hate the idea of eating kangaroos! But I've heard that kangaroo meat is sold in your country. Why?

— KILLO

Actually, kangaroo is very tasty!! The meat is very lean (not fatty) and it tastes something like deer meat. Kangaroo tail also makes excellent soup!!

Many people are shocked to hear that we eat kangaroo in Australia. There are millions and millions of kangaroos in Australia. The kangaroo is not a threatened species.

I like Perth. Could you tell us a little bit about the city and studying there?

— 快乐女神

Perth is a really great city on the west coast of Australia – its population is over one million and Perth has four universities, along with excellent TAFEs (institutes of technical and further education), and private vocational and English language colleges and schools. Perth has great seafood and fresh produce. You can find more at: http://www.perth.wa.gov.au/html/res10_.php

I have to find a part-time job if I study in Australia. Is it easy?

— KILLO

Firstly, you have to demonstrate financial independence (in accordance with the requirements of the student visa application) to successfully apply for a visa.

However, once in Australia, many students like to look for part-time work to supplement their finances. They must apply for a work permit from the DIMIA (the Department of Immigration) once they have commenced their studies.

Choosing and Applying:

We know that Chinese students must take IELTS (International English Language Testing System) before applying to study in Australia. But many agencies



Ayers Rock is one of Australia's most famous landmarks.

Photo by Photocom



Katharine Campbell

Photo by Wang Xiaoxi

in China are telling students they do not need to take the exam if they apply to Australian schools through them. Is that true?

— nellie

If you are applying to study at a school in Australia (571 visa subclass) then you need to take IELTS.

However, there are also some 'waivers' – that means that if other conditions are satisfied, the IELTS isn't necessary.

There are also some alternative tests. Students who have good English results from their Year 9 (junior high school graduation test) – more than 75 percent – can also be exempted from taking the IELTS.

I like the tropical climate in northern Australia. Are there interesting courses and universities there?

— wenwen

I lived in Darwin for many years – Darwin is the capital of the Northern Territory – it is located in the tropics! Darwin is a small city – just about 100,000 people. Charles Dar-

win University offers degree and diploma courses across a wide range of subjects – for example, law, tourism and hospitality, humanities, indigenous studies, education, business, and so on. It's a great place to live and study, especially if you also like 'outdoors' living!

Education Quality:

Would you please introduce some differences between the Adelaide and Monash universities?

— rosytulip

Both are well-regarded universities with strong focuses on research and a broad range of faculties. You should check their websites for detailed information about courses and campus life: www.monash.edu.au, and www.adelaide.edu.au.

Monash has traditionally recruited larger numbers of international students – it is a multi-campus university in Melbourne. Adelaide University is one of the oldest universities in Australia, established over 100 years ago.

Are there any new or distinguished subjects in Australian universities?

— Magic girl

Australian universities are constantly reassessing the relevance and content of programs on offer. Some new courses include e-business and e-commerce, some cutting edge programs in the fields of nano technology, just to name a few! You can find more at www.cricos.gov.au or www.tenfields.dest.gov.au, which are both government information websites.

Are there any universities for aboriginal people?

— Ali

Thanks for this interesting question. There is one 'dedicated' higher education institution for Australia's indigenous students – it's called Batchelor College, in the Northern Territory. In addition, all universities enroll aboriginal students, and there are special assistance programs to help aboriginal students succeed in their studies. A number of universities offer programs, which specialize in indigenous (Aboriginal) studies. The Australian government has a priority to increase participation at university by Australian aboriginal students.

Please give me some information about the University of Tasmania.

— AugustaLee

The University of Tasmania is the only university in our most southern state. It has a long history – more than 100 years.

The university has a strong research capability and has faculties in most disciplines, such as health sciences, law, business, environmental studies, humanities, engineering and Antarctic studies.

Ask Ayi:

Q: I am an undergraduate studying management in La Trobe University. Can I shift my major to mass media for a master's? Which universities in Australia are the best in mass media?

A: If you obtain a bachelor's degree from La Trobe, you can certainly apply to a master's program for mass media in Australia or any other country in the world, such as the UK.

I'd recommend Australian universities including the University of Sydney, University of Melbourne, Macquarie University, Australian National University and University of New South Wales.

Q: I am a clinical medicine graduate student in Beijing University and will graduate in 2006 with a master's degree in orthopedic surgery. Can I continue my studies in Australia? How can I do?

A: For clinical medicine, you cannot study further abroad without further specialization. One of the best choices for you is to apply to a related line of studies, like pharmacology, biochemistry or chemistry, and then you can work as an intern in a clinic or hospital.

Q: I'm an electrical engineering undergraduate and want to study in Australia after graduation. Can you recommend some Australian universities that offer scholarships?

A: Usually Australian universities do not provide any financial support, including scholarships, to overseas students.

There are ways to cut the costs of education, though. You can apply to the immigration administration for an off-campus part-time job, which average 20 hours per week. You can also get small payments for laboratory work.

If you really want to study abroad on scholarship, you can try to do so in the US, Canada, Singapore, or head to a Northern European country where there are no university tuition fees.

UK Cracking Down on Bogus Schools

by Zhao Hongyi

Over 100 suspect schools are under investigation in the UK, the British media reported last week.

The Home Office, the country's interior ministry, is cracking down on non-accredited educational establishments that may have helped foreign students obtain visas and illegally enter the country, according to last week's *Gazette*.

The Immigration and Naturalization Department has drafted a list of the schools and informed the visa sections of all UK embassies worldwide to withdraw visas extended to foreign students enrolled by such schools.

British media have run a spate of stories about bogus colleges, including allegations of involvement by gang masters employing illegal immigrants, the Russian mafia and other elements of organized crime.

Rumors say that the deaths of 18 Chinese workers in Morecambe Bay in February this year also involved student visa fraud, the *Gazette* said.

Alex Pinfield, press officer of the UK Embassy in Beijing, confirmed the list.

"But we can't provide you the list at present for legal reasons," Pinfield told *Beijing Today*, "Because those bogus schools have not been convicted on criminal charges yet."

The list was for visa officers' reference only, he explained, adding that the bogus school issue did not involve many Chinese students.

Tracy Driscoll, public relations manager for the British Council, said Chinese students can check the legal status and quality of British schools at her office before applying.

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By Lv Pinrou

In Chinese it's called *yexiao* – in English, the midnight snack. Either way, late night dining is local, and global, tradition and a practice in which thousands of Beijingers are indulging during these heady days of football in the wee hours as the Euro Cup winds up.

In Beijing, the very late meal used to be synonymous with one beloved dining area, Dongzhimennei, or Ghost Street, but urban renewal has sapped that former nighthawk den of some of its greasy, spicy splendor.

Nowadays, there are plenty of options for all-night eating, many more adventurous than the standards of *zhou*, or porridge, and oily Sichuan fare a la Ghost Street. Below, *Beijing Today* introduces a few 24-hour restaurants from different parts of town sure to sate a post-midnight craving in unexpected ways.



High-quality hotpot all night at Chengdu Pazi Huoguo

Photos by Li Shuzhuan

Nighthawks and Hungry Ghosts

Where to get a bite – anytime

While it has cemented a deserved reputation for its fashionable décor and tasty Guangxi cuisine, many people seem to overlook the fact that the **Taohuayuan** restaurant, also known as Walhalla, is open 24-7. Tucked down an alley south of Gongti Beilu near the Loft, Taohuayuan's first draw is its expansive



Huiweiyu, fish stewed with beer and more

windows, though the views out of the second story restaurant are not exactly striking. Inside, a sense of rustic elegance is developed through flowing white gauze, black wooden tables, plenty of plants and interesting little knickknacks scattered around. This is a place for a classy brand of late night dining.



Jiecai men yutou, stewed taro with mustard

Most of the dishes on the intriguing menu are in the style of Guilin, and many are sure to sound, taste or smell strange to the uninitiated. Keeping an open mind, however, can lead to some fun culinary discovery at this restaurant.



Sungan tuguoji, chicken with dried bamboo shoots

Guangxi dishes are known for having a pungent mix of spice and sour flavors, often the result of plentiful use of pickled peppers. Those flavors and more explain the popularity of the house special *huiweiyu*, fish braised in a stew of beer, onions, green and red peppers and chunks of tomato. The dish is served in a chafing pot for boiling at the table and its flavor deepens the longer it stews.

The *sungan tuji guo*, or

chicken with dried bamboo shoots, is also served in a chafing pot, but has a delicately different flavor thanks to the prime dried bamboo shoots brought all the way up from distant Guangxi. The tender shoots are preserved all-naturally and manage to soak up some flavor from the chicken, rendering them irresistible.

Chicken itself is the highlight of the *mizhi xunjichi*, smoked wings cut in half. The thick meat has a strong smoky flavor and an almost jerky-like texture.

It's not the best idea for a late night snack, but diners who like it hot would be well advised to order the *lajiao chao larouganr*, a pile of sliced chilies stir-fried with chunks of salty, preserved belly pork. The combined flavor of the chilies and bacony meat is delicious, until a wave of satisfying fire sweeps the mouth and sends you back for more.

Beat that heat with a starchy dish like the *jiecai men yutou*, or stewed taro with mustard. Big taro are stewed then mashed into a soothing dish still piquant from the pickled vegetables.

Wash it all down with unusual drinks like the Guilin *sanhuajiu*, a kind of rice wine served in a bamboo tube, or a house-brewed rice wine best served chilled.

Where: No. 4 courtyard, Gongti Beilu, Chaoyang
Average cost: 60 yuan **Tel:** 6586 9507

The owner of the **Shizhongtang** Sichuan-style restaurant is a writer, explaining the periodic patronage of stars from the literature and entertainment fields. The menu also betrays the restaurant's literary pedigree, using euphemisms, references and poetic language to name many dishes.

A popular house special is the *xuerande fengcai tongguo*, a pot of tender beef sliced thin and cooked with fresh tomatoes and shallots. The broth takes on an eye-catching red hue and a delicate flavor sure to satisfy. An ideal pairing for the dish is a plate of spicy *hongyou paocai*, pickles with red pepper oil.

The rustic *fenghuang zhitou jiejiégao*, or chicken with bamboo, matches spice with a fragrant, earthy flavor provided by the tip-top bamboo shoots shipped up from Sichuan. The dish is good

for the kidneys and lungs and not excessively hard on the wallet at 88 yuan per pot.

The award for best name could go to *bangda suiyangdi*, which literally translates to "beat Suiyangdi with a stick," referring to an infamously evil emperor from the Sui Dynasty. Why is it so named? Who knows, but there is no question this dish of fresh fern richly seasoned and stir-fried with meat is vengefully tasty.

Where: 177 Beitucheng Xilu, Haidian
Average cost: 40 yuan **Tel:** 6203 6867



A Chengdu Pazi Huoguo hotpot spread

Attention to quality and details explains the lasting popularity of the **Chengdu Pazi Huoguo** hot pot restaurant, which has been operating since 1989.

Look no further than the broth base to see why this establishment stands above, as the soups are made with choice ingredients and cooked to be restorative and savory but not greasy. Most people go for the classic yin-yang pot, or *yuanyang huoguo*, meaning one half is spicy, the other not.

The selection of materials for cooking in the broth hardly sticks to the predictable standards. Try the *xianggu gongwan*, springy meatballs made of minced chicken and mushroom that can't be found anywhere else in the capital.

The golden needle mushrooms, or *jinzhenqu*, have a bright, golden color and are brought up from Sichuan Province.

Where: 13 Shunyuanli, Chaoyang
Average cost: 40 yuan **Tel:**

8451 0202

Nighthawks looking for exotic fare should head straight to the **De-con Asian Cafe and Restaurant**



Taishi dongyin huoguo yu, fish in Thai-style hotpot

(**Gujin Zhongwai**), a funky place that serves all manner of Southeast Asian food around the clock.

The extensive, if not especially well organized, menu identifies the origins of each dish by code mostly corresponding to Vietnam, Thailand, Singapore and Hong Kong.



Pho – Vietnamese beef noodle soup (shengshu niuroutang hefen)

Hotpot is a favorite choice of local hungry ghosts and De-con does not disappoint with its unusual version, the

taishi dongyin huoguo yu, or Dongyam Fish. The pot's winning point is its pungent broth, made like classic Thai tom yam soups with a mix of flavorings such as ginger, chilies, lemongrass, lime juice thickened up to a milky finish. It comes accompanied by servings of fish slices, mushrooms, tofu, baby corn and fresh leafy vegetables for dunking. At 98 yuan, it's not cheap, but it's enough to serve at least two.

For a smaller fix of similar flavors at about a quarter of the price, just dial up a bowl of dongyam gon (*dongyin gong*) soup, filled with spices and seafood.

Many seafood lovers steer straight to the curry crab (*gali chaoxie*), in which fresh crabs are deep-fried and then stir-fried in a delectable mix of spicy curry sauce and cooling coconut milk. Prices vary by season and quantity.

Ratchet up the spice level with an order of *mogui laji*, or hot and spicy chicken, which the kitchen claims is the most incendiary chicken served in town, surpassing even the infamous *laziji* served at Sichuan establishments.

One of the healthiest items on the menu for a post-midnight meal is the Vietnamese soup *pho* – here called *shengshu niuroutang hefen*, or Vietnamese mixed beef noodles in soup. It might not be as good as the pho served in Saigon, but De-con's version has all the basics down, with a clear, rich broth made from boiling beef bones with spices for hours, served with tender rice noodles and thin slices of beef that actually cook in the hot soup. Top off a bowl with a handful of fresh herbs, bean sprouts and a spritz of lime juice, and add hot or hoisin sauce for extra flavor.

Natural sides to a bowl of pho or spicier items are rolls, served fried or uncooked in interesting varieties labeled spring, summer, autumn, and winter rolls, and more unusual versions like the spicy tuna roll.

There's also a wide selection of sweet Southeast Asian treats that may be just the thing for sating the late night munchies.

Little soothes the throat better in summer than a tall glass of *qingning suda*, or iced soda with lime, Vietnamese-style, a cooling mix made with imported fresh limes and plenty of sugar to cut the bitterness.

Where: Second floor, e-tower, 12 Guanghua Lu, Chaoyang (south of Kerry Center)
Average cost: 50 yuan **Tel:** 6586 7730

Manage the Munchies



Edward Hopper's Nighthawks would likely suffer from poor sleep, bad dreams and slow metabolism as penance for their late night meal.

breakfast, key to maintaining energy through the day and keeping a solid metabolic rate.

When there is no resisting the midnight munchies, it is important to pick and choose for minimal aftereffects. Good choices for midnight snacks are ones high in carbohydrates and low in fat and protein.

That means avoiding meat

products, which tend to sit in the digestive tract for hours. High protein foods also stimulate the release of dopamine, a neurotransmitter that sparks mental alertness – not a good idea before hitting the sack. On the other hand, snacks high in healthy carbs, like cereal, wholegrain muffins and bread or a small bagel are

digested quickly and can even help bring on sleep.

Other recommended choices are yogurt mixed with granola, raw vegetables like carrot sticks, which can be served with a low-fat dip, fresh fruit and homemade popcorn, a nearly ideal healthy snack when not overloaded with butter, oil or salt.

Personal Classifieds

Accommodation

A NGO employee who just settled down in Beijing needs to find one-bedroom apartment near the subway. Separate toilet and air-conditioning preferred. Expected price: 800 yuan per month. Sharing an apartment is acceptable. Contact: itisyang@sina.com

Two bedroom apartment for rent. Well-decorated apartment in Dongzhimenwai Dajie, near the embassy of Australia and Pizza Hut, with home appliances and broadband Internet access. 2,300 yuan per month. Contact: soullivan@sina.com

2-bedroom apartment for rent. 5 minutes walk from Chaoyangmen subway station. 103 square meters, bright, modern decoration, fully furnished. US\$1,000 per month. Contact: 13031015365, Angel Fan

An apartment near Chaoyang Garden, with 3 bedrooms, 2 washrooms, 1 living room, occupying 114 square meters. 31st floor, good view, 3 kilometers to CBD. 6,500 yuan or \$850 per month. Contact: Claire, 13552209059, 8559 1924, or xiaodong95777@yahoo.ca

For Sale and Wanted

Leather sofa, yellow, almost new, 2 meters long, 1,000 yuan or \$125. Dressing table, red orange color, almost new, 1.5 meters long, 1,000 yuan. Dressing chair, red orange color, almost new, 200 yuan. Dining table, antique Chinese style, brown red color, 10,000 yuan. Wet/dry vacuum cleaner, almost new, 1,000 yuan. Contact: Claire, 13552209059, 8559 1924, or xiaodong95777@yahoo.ca

Situations Vacant and Wanted

A 4-star international chain hotel is looking for a sales executive with the following qualifications: preferable working experience in an international hotel; reasonably good English, oral and written; positive attitude and self motivated; like challenges; a team player. Interested candidates please send your resume to marygoh@163bj.com

A 28-year-old girl, major in finance, with experience as editor, translator, consultant, reporter, and investor, is looking for a job related to English and economy or finance. "I am ready to contribute myself to the job". Contact: yyying_2004@126.com

May, a MBA student, 7 years marketing and PR experience (telecom industry), 2 years investment consulting and managerial experiences (finance industry), all in multinational companies. She has a sensitive mind for business opportunities, excels at two-way communication and has strategic leadership abilities. Seeking a full or part-time job in a familiar field. Her email: mayhan729@vip.sina.com

A four-star international hotel is looking for an executive floor manager. He or she will be self-motivated, with a strong sense of responsibility, decent communication skills in English and working experience in 4- or 5-star hotels. Interested candidates, please send your resume to hrm@novotelxinqiaobj.com or call 6513 3366 ext. 1739

Hao, a 24-year girl, has been an English teacher for three years and is studying English in Beijing. Seeking a part-time job over summer vacation teaching Chinese teenagers English or foreign teenagers standard Mandarin. Her email: grace4024770@chinaren.com

Justing Dong specializes in long-

term consulting for companies, foreign arbitration and investment consulting. Contact: 8669 0018, email: dsqfair@sina.com

Oral English teacher wanted. Sunlight English school is looking for qualified oral English Teachers for summer camp held from July 15 to August 4 to teach students between 9 to 13 years old. Requirements: Native English speaker; at least 2 years teaching experience; TESL certificate preferred; easy-going and energetic. Payment: very competitive salary; free meals and accommodation. Contact: Mr. Tong, 13701055942, 62755463; email CV to: sunlightpku@hotmail.com

Language Exchange

Hao, 24, has been an English teacher for three years and is studying English major in Beijing. She'd like to make friends with successful English learners and native English speakers. Her email: grace4024770@chinaren.com

Jane, a Beijing female editor with a bachelor's degree in literature and language, hopes to meet a native English speaker who wants to learn

Chinese. Her email: yuanjane789@yahoo.com.cn

Zahid Ayub, 30, male, living in Beijing, seeks a partner for language, information, recreation and etc. exchange. His email: zahidayub99@hotmail.com

European very senior professional and businesswoman is interested in finding Chinese senior professionals and business people interested in learning about European business culture and languages in exchange for practicing Chinese language with her. Contact: epwbeijing@ya.com

Personals

Successful 40-year-old man living in New York would like to meet a nice Asian girl between the age of 20-40 for marriage. If interested please email: douglas10019@hotmail.com

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Exhibitions



World Cultural Heritage

This dramatic show features over 80 works taken by famous photographer Zhou Jiansheng during trips taken over the past nine years to 77 countries to shoot World Cultural Heritage sites.

Where: National Gallery of Fine Arts **When:** through Saturday **Admission:** 20 yuan **Tel:** 6400 6326



Two Blossoms

An exhibition of works by Jin Jingxi and Fu Chunmei. Through elegant, lucid and calm pieces, Korean artist Jin Jingxi describes blossoms of the heart with a distinctly international style. Chinese artist Fu Chunmei's paintings have a purified taste with emphasis on color and pattern.

Where: New Millennium Art Gallery, Second floor, Xin 2 Diyang Mansion, Beilu Dongsanhuan, Chaoyang **When:** July 3-27, 9 am - 6 pm **Admission:** free **Tel:** 8453 6193



Humor and Class

Guan Yong's oil paintings are reflections on history and authority, often questioning both through sage use of humor. The works have an unusual style and underlying concepts, expressing understanding and caring for all people while representing different aspects of society. **Where:** Qin Gallery, Hua Wei Li Enjoy Paradise-1E (North of Beijing Curio City) Chaoyang **When:** through July 15, 9:30 am - 7 pm **Admission:** free **Tel:** 8779 0461

Nomads

This exhibition shines light on the cultural and historical traditions of nomadic ethnic people from the vast grasslands of northern China. Collected from 20 museums across the nation, the show displays the great changes experienced by these nomads over 3,000 years. Many of the culture relics are being displayed for the first time and all illustrate the magnificent history of ethnic groups like the Donghu, Hun, Xianbei (Sienpi), Tujue (Turk), Qidan (Khitan) and Mongolians.



Where: Millennium Monument Museum, 9 Fuxing Road, Haidian **When:** until August 28, 9 am - 4:30 pm **Admission:** 30 yuan for adults, 15 yuan for students **Tel:** 6857 3281

Everlasting History

This exhibition of around 50 classic Russian paintings from the past 200 years will include some famous works. The show was jointly organized by the ministries of culture of both China and Russia as an important forum for cultural exchange between the two nations.

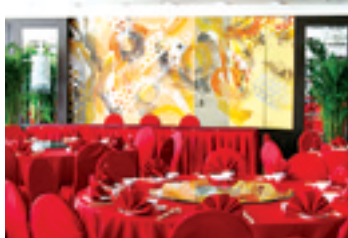


Where: Today Gallery, third floor, 9 Jindian Garden, 9 Wenhuiyuan Beilu, Haidian **When:** until July 9, 9 am - 5 pm **Admission:** 10 yuan **Tel:** 6223 8309

Good Hotel Art

Yang Jiusheng has developed his own school of art and many of his works now adorn the walls of five-star hotels. This show of 50 of his works is Yang's first solo exhibition. The exhibition hall will be decorated to look like a hotel to add to the effect. A seminar will be held at the opening to discuss the art of hotel interior decoration and design.

Where: Today Gallery, Third floor, 9 Jindian Garden, 9 Wenhuiyuan Beilu, Haidian **When:** July 3- 9, 9 am - 5 pm **Admission:** free **Tel:** 6223 8309



Activities



YPHH Wine Tasting at Centro

The fifth YPHH Wine Tasting at Centro again offers the chance to sample wines from five continents (one from each). To match the summer heat, Centro has chosen a white wine theme - Chardonnay. Hot and cold can-

apes and snacks also provided.

Where: Centro, Kerry Centre Hotel, 1 Guanghua Lu, Chaoyang **When:** July 7, 6:30-8:30 pm **Admission:** 100 yuan (advisable to make reservations via www.yphh.com) **Tel:** 6561 8833

Trip to Ancient Town of Yongning

Travel with the Chinese Culture Club to the ancient town of Yongning at Yanqing in Beijing's suburbs. The town dates back 600 years and features beautifully preserved architecture, including the town's imperial gates, shopping streets, a Catholic church and the Fire

God's Temple, from different ages of its past.

When: Sunday, 9 am - 6 pm, meet at the Chinese Culture Club to catch the bus (Anjialou, Liangmaqiao Lu, Chaoyang) **Cost:** 150 yuan (130 yuan for members) Registration by email and a deposit is required, or pay



Movies

I soliti ignoti (Big Deal)

Directed by Mario Monicelli, starring Vittorio Gassman, Marcello Mastroianni, Toto and Claudia Cardinale. This comedy tells the story of Peppe, a former boxer who organizes a break-in into a pawnshop. Tiberio, an unemployed photographer, Mario, the Sicilian Michele and Cafanelle, an ex-jockey, are the other members of the gang. Though they are advised by Dante, a retired burglar, the job does not prove as easy as they anticipate. Italian with English subtitles

Where: Italian Embassy, 2 Dong'er Jie, Sanlitun **When:** Saturday, 7 pm **Admission:** free **Tel:** 6532 2187



Mama's Gold (Jin Wawa)

Directed by Joanne Cheng. This documentary, filmed in the historical town of Lijiang, tells the moving story of one woman (Mama) and her 300 once destitute children, ranging in age from 2 to 18 and originating from 14 different ethnic groups, all survivors of devastating earthquakes and poverty stricken regions of rural China. Revolving around the conflict between Mama and an American sponsor who takes her to Chinese court, the film reveals the complex multi-cultural worlds of both children and adults who unfortunately share little in common. The film captures the emotional journey of Mama and her children who desperately need each other.

Where: Cherry Lane Movie Theater, 29 Liangmaqiao Lu, Chaoyang **When:** Friday and Saturday, 8 pm **Admission:** 50 yuan **Tel:** 13501251303

Lo Sceicco Bianco (The White Sheik)

Directed by Federico Fellini, starring Alberto Sordi and Brunella Bovo. In this comedy portraying the wacky first two days of a marriage, punctilious clerk Ivan brings his virginal bride to Rome for a honeymoon,



an audience with the Pope, and to present her to his uncle. They arrive early in the morning and he has time for a nap. She sneaks off to find the offices of a romance magazine she reads religiously: she wants to meet the "White Sheik," the hero of a soap-opera photo strip. Star-struck, she ends up 20 miles from Rome, alone on a boat with the "sheik". A distraught Ivan covers for her, claiming she's ill. That night, both wander the streets, she tempted by suicide, he by prostitutes. The next day, at 11, is their papal audience. Can things still right

themselves? Italian with Chinese subtitles

Where: Italian Embassy, 2 Dong'er Jie, Sanlitun **When:** Sunday, 7 pm **Admission:** free **Tel:** 6532 2187

Master of Everything (Ziyu Zile)

Directed by Li Xin, starring Zun Long, Li Wen, Tao Hong and Xia Yu. This romance features lots of laughs and kung fu. Mi Jihong and his sister A Lian live in a still and quiet mountain village. Mi falls in love with A Lian's good friend Hu Hua, but he never gets a chance to express his love. Finally, he thinks up of an idea to catch her heart: make his own movie. How will he carry out this mission impossible?

Where: UME International Cineplex (Huaxing Guoji Yingcheng), 44 Kexueyuan Nanlu, Shuangyushu, Haidian **When:** opens today **Tel:** 8211 2851



in advance **Tel:** 8462 2081

Bj Hikers

This weekend's A-to-B hike starts at a lush valley north of the Ming tombs with the Great Wall in sight. The hike follows the valley to a fork and comes back along another valley. Both valleys are deep with streams running at their bottoms. Those interested can walk up to the Wall for a view at the end of the hike.

Where: Changping County **When:** July 4, pick up at 8 am at the Lido Hotel outside of Starbucks **Cost:** 150 yuan (100 yuan for children under 12) **Tel:** 13910025516

TV and Radio Highlights

HBO	
2 Friday	
Blade II	9 pm
3 Saturday	
Star Trek: Nemesis	9 pm
4 Sunday	
Clueless	8 pm
5 Monday	
Twister	9 pm
6 Tuesday	
The Glass House	10:55 pm
7 Wednesday	
Heist	9 pm
8 Thursday	
Red Skies	9 pm
CCTV-9	
Monday - Friday	
Around China	6:30 am
Cultural Express	8:30 am
Nature and Science	
Chinese Civilization	11:30 am
Cultural Express	2:30 pm
Nature and Science	
Chinese Civilization	5:30 pm
Dialogue	7:30 pm
News Updates	
Asia Today	8 pm
Sports Scene	11:15 pm
Saturday	
Travelogue	9:30 am
Center Stage	11:30 am
Sunday	
Sports Weekend	10 am
Documentary	10:30 am
This Week	12:30 am
China Radio International 91.5 FM	
Monday - Friday	
Easy FM Afternoon	2-7 pm
Fun in Beijing	5-5:30 pm
Joy FM	9:05-11 pm
Saturday	
Music Memories	8:05-11 am
Euro Hit 40	12:05-1 pm
Music Sans Frontiers	6:05-8 pm
Joy FM	9:05-11 pm
Sunday	
Music Memories	8:05-11 am
Jazz Beat	6:05-8 pm
Joy FM	9:05-11 pm

We are glad to receive your feedback. We will print employment, language exchange and accommodation info for individuals. Feel free to email us at bjtodayinfo@ ynet.com or call 6590 2521

By Lü Pinrou

By Peng Juan

Since the 14th century, Kaiping has traditionally been a source of large waves of emigration abroad, and a melting pot of ideas and trends brought back by overseas Chinese.

Diaolou, or fortified watchtowers, in Kaiping were first constructed in the early Qing Dynasty (1644-1911). Initially they were constructed to guard against floods. During the waning years of the Qing reign and the early years of the Republic of China (1912-1949) overseas Chinese and local people built more towers to guard themselves against the ravages of war and rampant banditry. Diaolou construction reached its peak in the 1920s and 1930s, when there were more than 3,000 of these structures.

Diaolou can be divided into three basic types: *genglou*, *zhonglou*, and *zhulou*. *Genglou* were strong, plain structures built near a village to provide communal defense. The villagers contributed money collectively and each family would be entitled to a room. *Zhonglou*, the epitome of the dual diaolou function, were built in the country. *Zhulou* were high and spacious with exquisite sculpted details and offered tasteful, comfortable living quarters.

They were built in a variety of architectural styles. The early ones, as represented by Yinglong Tower, followed the design of brick Qing Dynasty houses, except that the walls were thicker and the doors and windows narrower and smaller. With the participation of returned overseas Chinese, diaolou began to adopt European characteristics. The top parts differed greatly, ranging from the typical traditional Chinese gabled roof to European-style castles and influences of ancient Roman architecture.

Today there are some 1,833 diaolou still standing, most of which have been abandoned by the original owners. As a cultural heritage, these diaolou constitute a vast architectural museum with historical, artistic and tourism value and have been proposed for inclusion in UNESCO's World Cultural Heritage list.

Li Garden

Located in the village of Genghua, about 13 kilometers from Kaiping, Li Garden was constructed in 1926 by Xie Weili, a Chinese emigrant to the United States. It covers 11,000 square meters with artificial waterways, bridges, pavilions and corridors. There are several yellow brick blue-tiled buildings in the garden, which demonstrate a fusion of western and Chinese designs. There are six villas and one diaolou, of which Panwen Villa and Panli Villa are the most magnificent. The rooftop is of traditional Chinese architectural style – glazed tiles and layers of eaves, while the lower part of the villas is western-style. Indoors, there are Italian stairs, Japanese pendant lamps, fireplaces and hygiene facilities imported from abroad, as well as Chinese rosewood furniture and large-scale murals.

The gardens flourish with a variety of flora, including the Chinese redbud, kapok, cypress and other precious flowers and plants. This exquisite combination of architecture and wildlife makes Li Garden both idyllic and panoramic.

Baoshu Tower

Baoshu Tower, located in Tangxi Xu, is just a few minutes walk from Li Garden. Built in 1921 and rebuilt in 1985, it is a huge four-storey concrete building. The body of the building is symmetrical in the shape of the Chinese character “田,” with Byzantine spires on the four corners.

Fang's Beacon

Fang's Beacon is located on the hillside north of Tangkou Xu, about 11 kilometers west of the city center of Kaiping. It was built in 1920 using collective contributions of the Fang clan. The square concrete five storey building is 18 meters high. The fourth floor has ancient Greek-style porticos on the four sides, and the roof shaped like a medieval castle, solemn, solid and mysterious. It has enormous searchlights and once served as a beacon giving warnings of bandit attacks.

Diaolou cluster of Zili Village

The largest diaolou cluster is at Zili, a village about 12 kilometers west of Kaiping. Across the paddies and duck ponds, the village is a “miniature Manhattan”, with nine or so well-preserved diaolou and six western-style villas.

The 15 towers are mostly three or four storeys high, made of concrete, but their top storeys are a clutter of arches and balustrades, ornamental urns, and turreted corners. Narrow stone paths weave through the marshy ground on which they stand; the soggy ground no doubt contributing to the slight lean some of them display. Life is peaceful here: villagers chop sugar cane, geese seek shade beneath banana palms, and crabs cluster beneath bridges.

Perhaps the most elegant is the six-storey Mingshi Tower on the right toward the rear of the village. Built in 1925, it contains luxurious, late-Qing furnishings and a top-floor ancestral shrine, which affords superb views across the countryside.



Hundreds of fish take bait in Li Garden.



Li Garden, built by Chinese emigrant Xie Weili in 1926.

Tower Tour

A visit to Kaiping

Lying halfway between Guangzhou, the provincial capital of Guangdong, and Macao, Kaiping epitomizes the image of the old, rural China.

Peasants in conical straw hats, knee-deep in mud, bend over their plants or hoist hand-powered threshing machines on shoulder poles. Adding to this picturesque scene are the many fortified watchtowers of various architectural styles called *diaolou*. Notwithstanding their different shapes and designs, they share some common characteristics, such as thick gray walls, rusty iron doors, small slit windows and shooting holes cleverly concealed in the walls.



Yangxian Villa, a diaolou in Zili Village.

Photos by Imaginechina

Ruishi Tower

On a short walk around the village of Jinjiangli, past villagers shooting pigeons away from drying rice, any of the narrow alleys can lead to Ruishi Lou, perhaps the most magnificent diaolou of all, built by a man who was said to run a bank and a herbal-medicine store in Hong Kong.

With an area of 92 square meters, it was constructed in 1923-1925 at the peak of the style's popularity. It has nine storeys and is the highest diaolou in Kaiping. Each floor has square windows in alignment with the top three floors of pavilions and winding corridors. Decorated corners and windows run from top to bottom and a cantilevered gallery embraces all the four sides. The Byzantine style roof and Roman dome supported by walls and pillars make this diaolou unique.

Bianchou Tower

Bianchou Tower, or the Leaning Tower, in Nanxing Village was constructed in 1903. Often described as China's answer to Italy's Leaning Tower of Pisa, it is a slender seven-storeyed concrete finger built over a period of two years, delayed due to financing difficulties. By the time the third floor was under construction, the building was already leaning, and currently the central axis is over two meters off center.

The Leaning Tower is inclined severely, but very photogenically, to one side, and reflected attractively in the nearby pond. It has survived numerous earthquakes and typhoons in the past century, making it Kaiping's most famous leaning diaolou.

Yinglong Tower

The oldest surviving diaolou is the Yinglong Tower in Sammenli Village, 20 minutes west of Kaiping, just off the main road (take the local No. 4 or 6 bus). It has a history of more than 400 years. A narrow pine-lined path leads to the village, past farmers carrying water from the well using a shoulder-pole, and elderly women seated in the shade of banyan trees.

The name “Yinglong” embodies the meaning of peace, luck and felicity. It is a three-storey solid brick refuge from floods as well as bandit attacks. The lower two reddish levels were built sometime in the middle of the 16th century and the upper, gray level was added in 1920. The walls are more than 1 meter thick, and there is a turret at each of the four corners of every level. It is a representative of the earliest style of traditional diaolou.

Canadian Village

Beside the No. 325 National Highway in Chikan, the Canadian Village, featuring 13 buildings of European architectural style all built during 1923-1935 by overseas Chinese living in Canada, is another interesting sight.

The first floor of most of the buildings have Roman pillars in the front, while the second and third floors usually have three domed arches supported by pillars in the front. The doors, windowsills and balconies are all carved in European-style designs. One can also find traditional Chinese decorations in some architectural details. Sihao Tower and Chunru Cottage are both worth a look.

Ancient Town of Chikan

Chikan is a quiet and peaceful little town southwest of Kaiping, with architecture of different styles, including gothic, Islamic and baroque domed arches and minarets. Two clans – Guan and Situ – live in the town, and overseas relatives of both have contributed greatly to the cultural development of the town over the years. Along the riverside one can see many western-style stores and houses.

The most distinctive building in the town is the Guan Library, constructed in 1923 with funds provided by overseas members of the Guan clan. Inside the library are many yellowed family photos, family trees, documents, and old book cabinets.

Local specialties

Eel rice, pod of bean curd, congee (zhou) with duck, Kaiping dog meat and various kinds of snacks

Accommodation

Kaiping: There are hotels near the coach station and the Huaqiao Building, with rooms for 60 to 80 yuan.

Xiangang: Qiaolian Hotel on the south bank of the river is the only option for visitors to stay.

Chikan: The small hotel beside the river offers rooms for 10 yuan per person. Jinyan Hotel is more comfortable slightly more expensive – 10 yuan for a bed in four bed dormitory and 50 yuan for a double room.

Getting there

Return flights to Guangzhou cost 2,040 to 3,400, depending on discount availability; return flights to Shenzhen are 2,100 to 3,500. Kaiping is a traffic hub, linked by the Guangzhou-Shenzhen, Guangzhou-Sanshui and Guangzhou-Shantou expressways. Taxies, buses, minibuses and motorcycles are readily available, making access to urban areas and local villages easy.